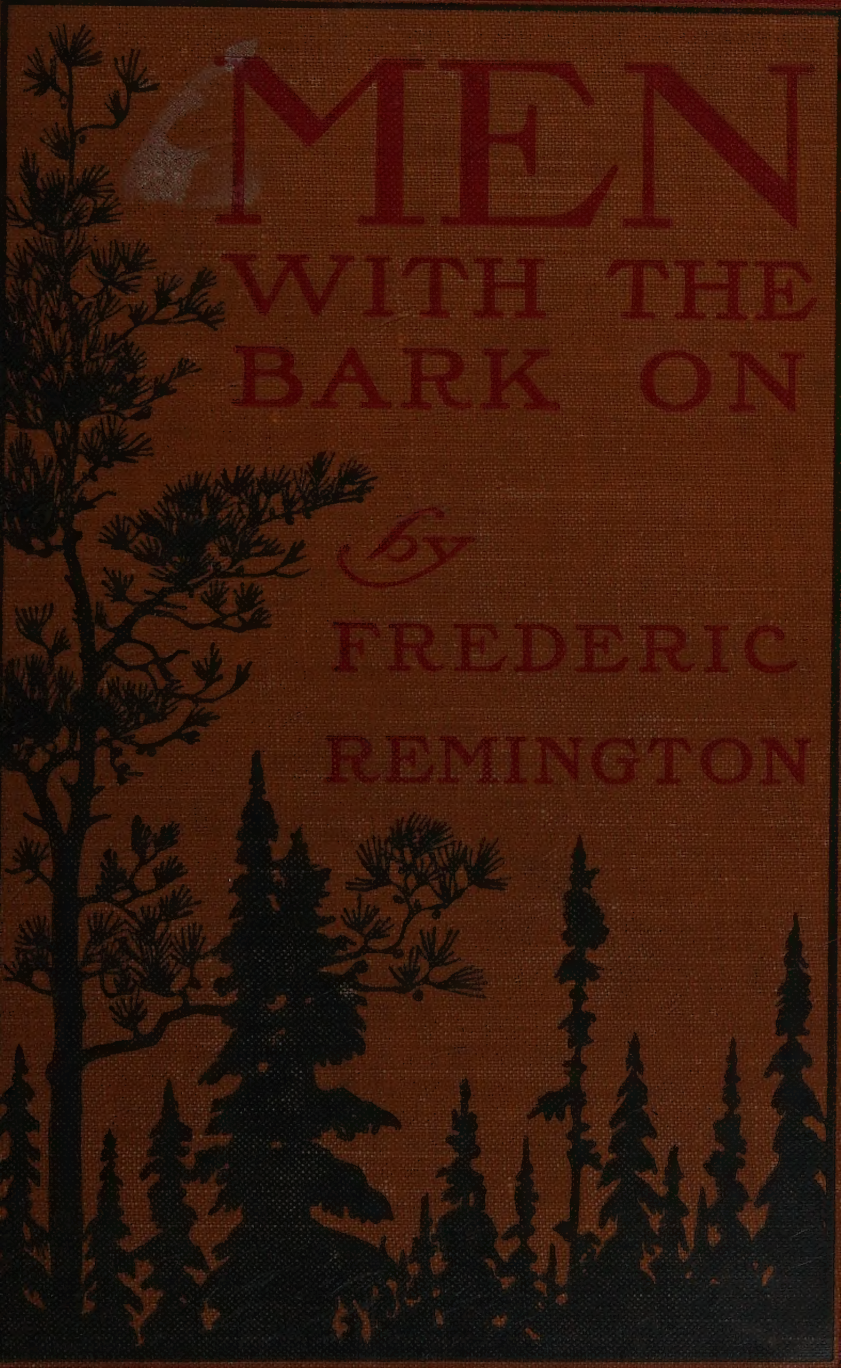
MEN WITH THE BARK ON

by

FREDERIC REMINGTON



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CAPTAIN GRIMES'S BATTERY GOING UP EL POSO HILL

Men with the Bark On

BY

FREDERIC REMINGTON

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

NEW YORK AND LONDON
HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
1900

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"Men with the bark on die like the wild animals, unnaturally—unmourned, and even unthought of mostly"

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THE WAR DREAMS

THE WAR DREAMS

AT the place far from Washington where the gray, stripped war-ships swing on the tide, and towards which the troop-trains hurry, there is no thought of peace. The shore is a dusty, smelly bit of sandy coral, and the houses in this town are built like snare-drums; they are dismal thoroughly, and the sun makes men sweat and wish to God they were somewhere else.

But the men in the blue uniforms are young, and Madame Beaulieu, who keeps the restaurant, strives to please, so it came to pass that I attended one of these happy-go-lucky banquets. The others were artillery officers, men from off the ships, with a little sprinkle of cavalry and infantry just for salt. They were brothers, and yellow-jack—hellish heat—bullets, and the possibility of getting mixed up in a mass of exploding

iron had been discounted long back in their school-boy days perhaps. Yet they are not without sentiment, and are not even callous to all these, as will be seen, though men are different and do not think alike—less, even, when they dream.

"Do you know, I had a dream last night," said a naval officer.

"So did I."

"So did I," was chorussed by the others.

"Well, well!" I said. "Tell your dreams. Mr. H——, begin."

"Oh, it was nothing much. I dreamed that I was rich and old, and had a soft stomach, and I very much did not want to die. It was a curious sort of feeling, this very old and rich business, since I am neither, nor even now do I want to die, which part was true in my dream.

"I thought I was standing on the bluffs overlooking the Nile. I saw people skating, when suddenly numbers of hippopotamuses —great masses of them—broke up through the ice and began swallowing the people. This was awfully real to me. I even saw Mac there go down one big throat as easily as a

cocktail. Then they came at me in a solid wall. I was crazed with fear — I fled. I could not run; but coming suddenly on a pile of old railroad iron, I quickly made a bicycle out of two car-wheels, and flew. A young hippo more agile than the rest made himself a bike also, and we scorched on over the desert. My strength failed; I despaired and screamed — then I woke up. Begad, this waiting and waiting in this fleet is surely doing things to me!"

The audience laughed, guyed, and said let's have some more dreams, and other things. This dream followed the other things, and he who told it was an artilleryman:

"My instincts got tangled up with one of those Key West shrimp salads, I reckon; but war has no terrors for a man who has been through my last midnight battle. I dreamed I was superintending two big 12-inch guns which were firing on an enemy's fleet. I do not know where this was. We got out of shot, but we seemed to have plenty of powder. The fleet kept coming on, and I had to do something, so I put an old superannuated sergeant in the gun. He

pleaded, but I said he was old, the case was urgent, it did not matter how one died for his country, etc.—so we put the dear old sergeant in the gun and fired him at the fleet. Then the battle became hot. I loaded soldiers in the guns and fired them out to sea until I had no more soldiers. Then I began firing citizens. I ran out of citizens. But there were Congressmen around somewhere there in my dreams, and though they made speeches of protest to me under the five-minute rule, I promptly loaded them in, and touched them off in their turn. The fleet was pretty hard-looking by this time, but still in the ring. I could see the foreign sailors picking pieces of Congressmen from around the breech-blocks, and the officers were brushing their clothes with their handkerchiefs. I was about to give up, when I thought of the Key West shrimp salad. One walked conveniently up to me, and I loaded her in. With a last convulsive yank I pulled the lock-string, and the fleet was gone with my dream."

"How do cavalrymen dream, Mr. B——?" was asked of a yellow-leg.

"Oh, our dreams are all strictly professional, too. I was out with my troop, being drilled by a big fat officer on an enormous horse. He was very red-faced, and crazy with rage at us. He yelled like one of those siren whistles out there in the fleet.

"He said we were cowards and would not fight. So he had a stout picket-fence made, about six feet high, and then, forming us in line, he said no cavalry was any good which could be stopped by any obstacle. Mind you, he yelled it at us like the siren. He said the Spaniards would not pay any attention to such cowards. Then he gave the order to charge, and we flew into the fence. We rode at the fence pell-mell—into it dashed our horses, while we sabred and shouted. Behind us now came the big colonel—very big he was now, and with great red wings—saying, above all the din, 'You shall never come back—you shall never come back!' and I was squeezed tighter and tighter by him up to this fence until I awoke; and now I have changed my cocktail to a plain vermouth."

When appealed to, the infantry officer

tapped the table with his knife thoughtfully: "My dream was not so tragic; it was a moral strain; but I suffered greatly while it lasted. Somehow I was in command of a company of raw recruits, and was in some trenches which we were constructing under fire. My recruits were not like soldiers—they were not young men. They were past middle age, mostly fat, and many had white side whiskers after the fashion of the funny papers when they draw banker types. I had a man shot, and the recruits all got around me; they were pleading and crying to be allowed to go home.

"Now I never had anything in the world but my pay, and am pretty well satisfied as men go in the world, but I suppose the American does not breathe who is averse to possessing great wealth himself; so when one man said he would give me $1,000,000 in gold if I would let him go, I stopped to think. Here is where I suffered so keenly. I wanted the million, but I did not want to let him go.

"Then these men came up, one after the other, and offered me varying sums of money to be allowed to run away—and specious ar-

guments in favor of the same. I was now in agony. D—n it! that company was worth nearly a hundred million dollars to me if I would let them take themselves off. I held out, but the strain was horrible. Then they began to offer me their daughters—they each had photographs of the most beautiful American girls—dozens and dozens of American girls, each one of which was a 'peach.' Say, fellows, I could stand the millions. I never did 'gig' on the money, but I took the photographs, said 'Give me your girls, and pull your freight!' and my company disappeared instantly. Do you blame a man stationed in Key West for it—do you, fellows?"

"Not by a d—d sight!" sang the company, on its feet.

"Well, you old marine, what did you dream?"

"My digestion is so good that my dreams have no red fire in them. I seldom do dream; but last night, it seems to me, I recall having a wee bit of a dream. I don't know that I can describe it, but I was looking very intently at a wet spot on the breast of a blue

uniform coat. I thought they were tears—woman's tears. I don't know whether it was a dream or whether I really did see it."

"Oh, d—n your dreams!" said the Doctor. "What is that bloody old Congress doing from last reports?"

THE BOWELS OF A BATTLE-SHIP

THE BOWELS OF A BATTLE-SHIP

MODERN war is supposed to be rapid, and we Americans think "time is money," but this war seems to be the murder of time, the slow torture of opportunity.

For seven long days and nights I have been steaming up and down on the battleship *Iowa*, ten miles off the harbor of Havana. Nothing happened. The *Mayflower* got on the land side of a British tramp and warned her off, and a poor Spanish fishing-schooner from Progreso, loaded with rotting fish, was boarded by a boat's crew from us. When the captain saw the becutlassed and bepistolled "tars" he became badly rattled, and told the truth about himself. A Spaniard has to be surprised into doing this. He had been many days out, his ice was gone,

and his fish were "high." He wanted to make Havana, telling the boarding-officer that the people of Havana were very hungry. He had been boarded five times off the coast by our people; so the lieutenant—who had just gotten out of bed, by-the-way—told him to take his cargo of odors out into the open sea, and not to come back again.

The appalling sameness of this pacing up and down before Havana works on the nerves of every one, from captain to cook's police. We are neglected; no one comes to see us. All the Key West trolley-boats run to the Admiral's flag, and we know nothing of the outside. We speculate on the Flying Squadron, the *Oregon*, the army, and the Spanish. I have an impression that I was not caught young enough to develop a love of the sea, which the slow passage of each day reinforces. I have formed a habit of damning the army for its procrastination, but in my heart of hearts I yearn for it. I want to hear a "shave-tail" bawl; I want to get some dust in my throat; I want to kick the dewy grass, to see a sentry pace in the moonlight, and to talk the language of my

tribe. I resist it; I suppress myself; but my homely old first love comes to haunt me, waking and sleeping—yes, even when I look at this mountain of war material, this epitome of modern science, with its gay white officers, who talk of London, Paris, China, and Africa in one breath. Oh, I know I shall fall on the neck of the first old "dough-boy" or "yellow-leg" I see, and I don't care if he is making bread at the time!

The Morro light has been extinguished, but two powerful searches flash back and forth across the sky. "Good things to sail by," as the navigator says. "We can put them out when the time comes." Another purpose they serve is that "Jackie" has something to swear at as he lies by his loaded gun—something definite, something material, to swear at. Also, two small gunboats developed a habit of running out of the harbor—not very far, and with the utmost caution, like a boy who tantalizes a chained bear. And at places in the town arises smoke.

"What is it?" asks the captain of marines.

"Big tobacco-factories working over-time for us," replies Doctor Crandell.

I was taken down into the machinery of the ship. I thought to find in it some human interest. Through mile after mile of underground passages I crawled and scrambled and climbed amid wheels going this way and rods plunging that, with little electric lights to make holes in the darkness. Men stood about in the overpowering blasts of heat, sweating and greasy and streaked with black—grave, serious persons of superhuman intelligence—men who have succumbed to modern science, which is modern life. Daisies and trees and the play of sunlight mean nothing to these—they know when all three are useful, which is enough. They pulled the levers, opened and shut cocks, showered coal into the roaring white hells under the boilers; hither and yon they wandered, bestowing mother-like attentions on rod and pipe. I talked at them, but they developed nothing except preoccupied professionalism. I believe they fairly worship this throbbing mass of mysterious iron; I believe they love this bewildering power which they control. Its problems entrance them; but it simply stuns me. At last when I stood on deck I

had no other impression but that of my own feebleness, and, as I have said, felt rather stunned than stimulated. Imagine a square acre of delicate machinery plunging and whirling and spitting, with men crawling about in its demon folds! It is not for me to tell you more.

Don't waste your sympathy on these men belowdecks—they will not thank you; they will not even understand you. They are "modern"—are better off than "Jackie" and his poor wandering soul—they love their iron baby, so leave them alone with their joy. Modern science does not concern itself about death.

The *Iowa* will never be lost to the nation for want of care. By night there are dozens of trained eyes straining into the darkness, the searches are ready to flash, and the watch on deck lies close about its shotted guns. Not a light shows from the loom of the great battle-ship. Captain Evans sits most of the time on a perch upon the bridge, forty feet above the water-line. I have seen him come down to his breakfast at eight bells with his suspenders hanging down be-

hind, indicating that he had been jumped out during the night.

The executive officer, Mr. Rogers, like the machinery down below, never sleeps. Wander where I would about the ship, I could not sit a few moments before Mr. Rogers would flit by, rapid and ghost-like—a word here, an order there, and eyes for everybody and everything. Behind, in hot pursuit, came stringing along dozens of men hunting for Mr. Rogers; and this never seemed to let up—midnight and mid-day all the same. The thought of what it must be is simply horrible. He has my sympathy—nervous prostration will be his reward—yet I greatly fear the poor man is so perverted, so dehumanized, as positively to like his life and work.

Naval officers are very span in their graceful uniforms, so one is struck when at "quarters" the officers commanding the turrets appear in their "dungaree," spotted and soiled. The *Iowa* has six turrets, each in charge of an officer responsible for its guns and hoisting-gear, delicate and complicated. In each turret is painted, in a sort of Sam Weller

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

writing, "Remember the *Maine*." The gun-captains and turret-men acquire a strange interest and pride in their charges, hanging about them constantly.

Two gun-captains in the forward turret used to sit on the great brown barrels of the 12-inch rifles just outside the posts, guarding them with jealous care; for it is a "Jackie" trick to look sharply after his little spot on shipboard, and to promptly fly into any stranger who defiles it in any way. At times these two men popped back into their holes like prairie-dogs. It was their hope and their home, that dismal old box of tricks, and it may be their grave. I was going to die with them there, though I resolutely refused to live with them. However, the *Iowa* is unsinkable and unlickable, and the hardware on the forward turret is fifteen inches thick, which is why I put my brand on it. So good-luck to Lieutenant Van Duzer and his merry men!

"Jackie," the prevailing thing on a man-of-war, I fail to comprehend fully. He is a strong-visaged, unlicked cub, who grumbles and bawls and fights. He is simple, handy,

humorous, and kind to strangers, as I can testify. The nearest he ever comes to a martial appearance is when he lines up at quarters to answer "Here!" to his name, and there is just where he doesn't martialize at all. He comes barefooted, hat on fifty ways, trousers rolled up or down, and everything blowing wide. He scratches his head or stands on one foot in a ragged line, which grins at the spectators in cheerful heedlessness, and he looks very much gratified when it is all over. His hope is for a bang-up sea-fight, or two roaring days of shore liberty, when he can "tear up the beach" with all the force of his reckless muscularity.

The marine, or sea-soldier, has succumbed to modern conditions, and now fights a gun the same as a sailor-man. He manages to retain his straight-backed discipline, but is overworked in his twofold capacity. This "soldier and sailor too" is a most interesting man to talk to, and I wish I could tell some of his stories. He marches into the interior of China or Korea to pull a minister out of the fire—thirty or forty of him against a million savages, but he gets his man. He

lies in a jungle hut on the Isthmus or a "dobie" house on the West Coast while the microbes and the "dogoes" rage.

But it's all horribly alike to me, so I managed to desert. The *Winslow*, torpedero, ran under our lee one fine morning, and I sneaked on board, bound for the flag-ship—the half-way station between us and Cayo Hueso. We plunged and bucked about in the roaring waves of the Gulf, and I nearly had the breakfast shaken out of me. I assure you that I was mighty glad to find the lee of the big cruiser *New York*.

On board I found that the flag-ship had had some good sport the day previous shelling some working parties in Matanzas. Mr. Zogbaum and Richard Harding Davis had seen it all, note-book in hand. I was stiff with jealousy; but it takes more than one fight to make a war—so here is hoping!

THE HONOR OF THE TROOP

THE HONOR OF THE TROOP

L TROOP in a volunteer regiment might be an unadulterated fighting outfit, but at first off, to volunteers, it would not be the letter L which they would fight for, so much as the mere sake of fighting, and they would never regard the letter L as of more importance than human life. Indeed, that letter would not signify to them any more than the "second set of fours," or the regimental bass drum. Later on it certainly would, but that would take a long time. In the instance of the L troop of which I speak, it had nearly one hundred years to think about, when any one in the troop cared to think about the matter at all. They were honorable years, and some of the best men living or dead have at one time or another followed that guidon. It had been through the "rifle" and "dragoon" periods of our history, and

was now part of the regular cavalry establishment, and its operations had extended from Lake Erie to the city of Mexico.

Long lists of names were on its old rolls—men long since dead, but men who in the snow and on the red sands had laid down all they had for the honor of L Troop guidon. Soldiers—by which is meant the real long-service military type—take the government very much as a matter of course; but the number of the regiment, and particularly the letter of their troop, are tangible, comparative things with which they are living every day. The feeling is precisely that one has for the Alma Mater, or for the business standing of an old commercial house.

The "old man" had been captain of L for years and years, and for thirty years its first sergeant had seen its rank and file fill up and disappear. Every tenth man was a "buck" soldier, who thought it only a personal matter if he painted a frontier town up after pay-day, but who would follow L troop guidon to hell, or thump any one's nose in the garrison foolish enough to take L in vain, and I fear they would go further than this—

yes, even further than men ought to go. Thus the "rookies" who came under the spell of L Troop succumbed to this veneration through either conventional decorum or the "mailed fist."

In this instance L Troop had been threading the chaparral by night and by day on what rations might chance, in hopes to capture for the honor of the troop sundry greasers, outlawed and defiant of the fulminations of the civil order of things. Other troops of the regiment also were desirous of the same thing, and were threading the desolate wastes far on either side. Naturally L did not want any other troop to round up more "game" than they did, so then horses were ridden thin, and the men's tempers were soured by the heat, dust, poor diet, and lack of success.

The captain was an ancient veteran, gray and rheumatic, near his retirement, and twenty-five years in his grade, thanks to the silly demagogues so numerous in Congress. He had been shot full of holes, bucketed about on a horse, immured in mud huts, frozen and baked and soaked until he should

have long since had rank enough to get a desk and a bed or retirement. Now he was chasing human fleas through a jungle—boys' work—and it was admitted in ranks that the "old man" was about ready to "throw a curb." The men liked him, even sympathized with him, but there was that d—— G Troop in the barrack next, and they would give them the merry ha-ha when they returned to the post if L did not do something.

And at noon—mind you, high noon—the captain raised his right hand; up came the heads of the horses, and L Troop stood still in the road. Pedro, the Mexican trailer, pointed to the ground and said, "It's not an hour old," meaning the trail.

"Dismount," came the sharp order.

Toppling from their horses, the men stood about, but the individuals displayed no noticeable emotion; they did what L Troop did. One could not imagine their thoughts by looking at their red set faces.

They rested quietly for a time in the scant shade of the bare tangle, and then they sat up and listened, each man looking back up

the road. They could hear a horse coming, which meant much to people such as these.

The men "thrown to the rear" would come first or "fire a shot," but with a slow pattering came a cavalry courier into view —a dusty soldier on a tired horse, which stepped stiffly along, head down, and if it were not for the dull kicking of the inert man, he would have stopped anywhere. The courier had ridden all night from the railroad, seventy-five miles away. He dismounted and unstrapped his saddle pocket, taking therefrom a bundle of letters and a bottle, which he handed to the "old man" with a salute.

The captain now had a dog-tent set up for himself, retiring into it with his letters and the bottle. If you had been there you would have seen a faint ironical smile circulate round the faces of L Troop.

A smart lieutenant, beautifully fashioned for the mounted service, and dressed in field uniform, with its touches of the "border" on the "regulations," stepped up to the dog-tent, and, stooping over, saluted, saying, "I

will run this trail for a few miles if the captain will give me a few men."

"You will run nothing. Do you not see that I am reading my mail? You will retire until I direct you—"

The lieutenant straightened up with a snap of his lithe form. His eyes twinkled merrily. He was aware of the mail, he realized the bottle, and he had not been making strategic maps of the captain's vagaries for four years to no purpose at all; so he said, "Yes, sir," as he stepped out of the fire of future displeasure.

But he got himself straightway into the saddle of a horse as nearly thoroughbred as himself, and riding down the line, he spoke at length with the old first sergeant. Then he rode off into the brush. Presently six men whose horses were "fit" followed after him, and they all trotted along a trail which bore back of the captain's tent, and shortly they came back into the road. He had arranged so as to avoid another explosion from the "old man."

Then Pedro Zacatin ran the trail of three ponies—no easy matter through the maze of

cattle-paths, with the wind blowing the dust into the hoof-marks. He only balked at a turn, more to see that the three did not "split out" than at fault of his own. In an opening he stopped, and pointing, said, in the harsh gutturals which were partly derived from an Indian mother, and partly from excessive cigarette-smoking: "They have stopped and made a fire. Do you see the smoke? You will get them now if they do not get away."

The lieutenant softly pulled his revolver, and raising it over his head, looked behind. The six soldiers opened their eyes wide like babies, and yanked out their guns. They raised up their horses' heads, pressed in the spurs, and as though at exercise in the riding-hall, the seven horses broke into a gallop. Pedro stayed behind; he had no further interest in L Troop than he had already displayed.

With a clattering rush the little group bore fast on the curling wreath of the campfire. Three white figures dived into the labyrinth of thicket, and three ponies tugged hard at their lariats; two shots rang, one

from the officer's revolver, one from a corporal's carbine, and a bugler-boy threw a brass trumpet at the fleeting forms.

"Ride 'em down! ride 'em down!" sang out the officer, as through the swishing brush bounded the aroused horses, while the bullets swarmed on ahead.

It was over as I write, and in two minutes the three bandits were led back into the path, their dark faces blanched.

The lieutenant wiped a little stain of blood from his face with a very dirty pocket-handkerchief, a mere swish from a bush; the corporal looked wofully at a shirt-sleeve torn half off by the thorns, and the trumpeter hunted up his instrument, while a buck soldier observed, "De 'old man' ull be hotter'n chilli 'bout dis."

The noble six looked at the ignoble three half scornfully, half curiously, after the manner of men at a raffle when they are guessing the weight of the pig.

"Tie them up, corporal," said the lieutenant, as he shoved fresh shells into his gun; "and I say, tie them to those mesquit-trees, Apache fashion — sabe? — Apache fashion,

"THREE BANDITS WERE LED BACK INTO THE PATH"

corporal; and three of you men stay here and hold 'em down." With which he rode off, followed by his diminished escort.

The young man rode slowly, with his eyes on the ground, while at intervals he shoved his campaign hat to one side and rubbed his right ear, until suddenly he pulled his hat over his eyes, saying, "Ah, I have it." Then he proceeded at a trot to the camp.

Here he peeped cautiously into the "old man's" dog-tent. This he did ever so carefully; but the "old man" was in a sound sleep. The lieutenant betook himself to a bush to doze until the captain should bestir himself. L Troop was uneasy. It sat around in groups, but nothing happened until five o'clock.

At this hour the "old man" came out of his tent, saying, "I say, Mr. B——, have you got any water in your canteen?"

"Yes, indeed, captain. Will you have a drop?"

After he had held the canteen between his august nose and the sky for a considerable interval, he handed it back with a loud "Hount!" and L Troop fell in behind him

as he rode away, leaving two men, who gathered up the dog-tent and the empty bottle.

"Where is that —— —— greaser? Have him get out here and run this trail. Here, you tan-colored coyote, kem up!" and the captain glared fiercely at poor Pedro, while the lieutenant winked vigorously at that perturbed being, and patted his lips with his hand to enjoin silence.

So Pedro ran the trail until it was quite dusk, being many times at fault. The lieutenant would ride out to him, and together they bent over it and talked long and earnestly. L Troop sat quietly in its saddles, grinned cheerfully, and poked each other in the ribs.

Suddenly Pedro came back, saying to the captain: "The men are in that bush—in camp, I think. Will you charge, sir?"

"How do you know that?" was the petulant query.

"Oh, I think they are there; so does the lieutenant. Don't you, Mr. B——?"

"Well, I have an idea we shall capture them if we charge," nervously replied the younger officer.

"Well— Right into line! Revolvers! Humph!" said the captain, and the brave old lion ploughed his big bay at the object of attack—it did not matter what was in front —and L Troop followed fast. They all became well tangled up in the dense chaparral, but nothing more serious than the thorns stayed their progress, until three shots were fired some little way in the rear, and the lieutenant's voice was heard calling, "Come here; we have got them."

In the growing dusk the troop gathered around the three luckless "greasers," now quite speechless with fright and confusion. The captain looked his captives over softly, saying, "Pretty work for L Troop; sound very well in reports. Put a guard over them, lieutenant. I am going to try for a little sleep."

The reflections of L Troop were cheery as it sat on its blankets and watched the coffee in the tin cups boil. Our enterprising lieutenant sat apart on a low bank, twirling his thumbs and indulging in a mighty wonder if that would be the last of it, for he knew only too well that trifling with the "old man" was no joke.

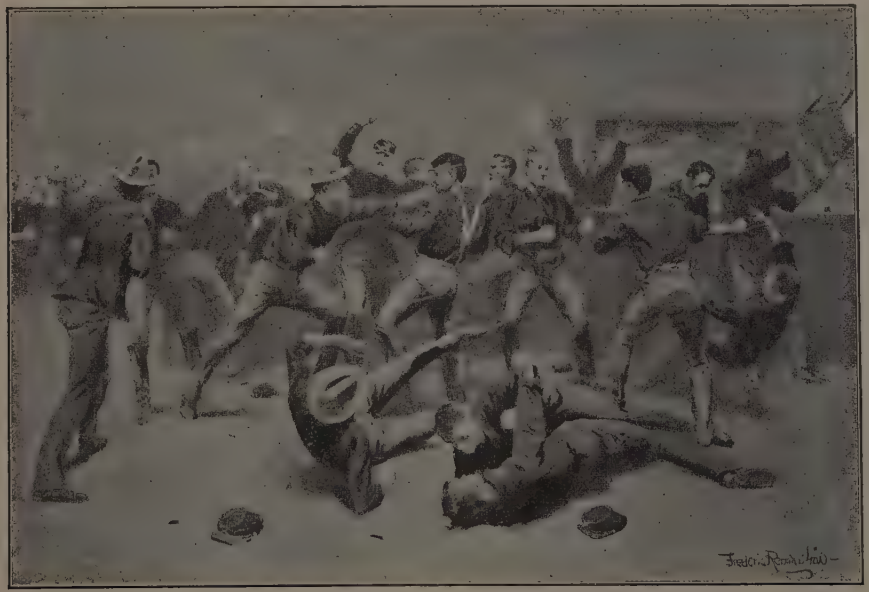
Presently he strolled over and called the old first sergeant—their relations were very close. "I think L had best not talk much about this business. G Troop might hear about it, and that wouldn't do L any good. Sabe?"

"Divil the word kin a man say, sir, and live till morning in L Troop."

Later there was a conference of the file, and then many discussions in the ranks, with the result that L Troop shut its mouth forever.

Some months later they returned to the post. The canteen rang with praise of the "old man," for he was popular with the men because he did not bother them with fussy duties, and loud was the pæan of the mighty charge over the big insurgent camp where the three great chiefs of the enemy were captured. Other troops might be very well, but L was "it."

This hard rubbing of the feelings of others had the usual irritating effect. One night the burning torch went round and all the troopers gathered at the canteen, where the wag of G Troop threw the whole unvarnished



"A BEAUTIFUL FIGHT ENSUED"

truth in the face of L members present. This, too, with many embellishments which were not truthful. A beautiful fight ensued, and many men slept in the guard-house.

After dark, L Troop gathered back of the stables, and they talked fiercely at each other; accusations were made, and recrimination followed. Many conferences were held in the company-room, but meanwhile G men continued to grind it in.

Two days later the following appeared in the local newspaper:

. . . . "Pedro Zacatin, a Mexican who served with troops in the late outbreak, was found hanging to a tree back of the post. There was no clew, since the rain of last night destroyed all tracks of the perpetrators of the deed. It may have been suicide, but it is thought at the post that he was murdered by sympathizers of the late revolution who knew the part he had taken against them. The local authorities will do well to take measures against lawless Mexicans from over the border who hang about this city," etc.

A SKETCH BY MacNEIL

A SKETCH BY MacNEIL

WE had to laugh. I chuckled all day, it was all so quaint. But I don't see how I can tell you, because you don't know MacNeil, which is necessary.

In a labored way, MacNeil is an old frontier scout with a well-frosted poll. He is what we all call a "good fellow," with plenty of story, laugh, and shrewd comment; but his sense of humor is so ridiculously healthy, so full-bloodedly crude, that many ceremonious minds would find themselves "off side" when Mac turns on his sense of jollity. He started years ago as a scout for Sheridan down Potomac way, and since then he has been in the Northwest doing similar duty against Indians, so a life spent in the camps and foot-hills has made no "scented darling" out of old man MacNeil. He is a thousand-times hero, but he does not in the least

understand this. If he could think any one thought he was such a thing he would opine that such a one was a fool. He has acted all his life in great and stirring events as unconscious of his own force as the heat, the wind, or the turn of tide. He is a pure old warrior, and nothing has come down the years to soften MacNeil. He is red-healthy in his sixties, and has never seen anything to make him afraid. The influence of even fear is good on men. It makes them reflective, and takes them out of the present. But even this refinement never came to Mac, and he needed it in the worst way.

So that is a bad sketch of MacNeil.

A little bunch of us sat around the hotel one day, and we were drawing Mac's covers of knowledge concerning Indians. As the conversation went on, Mac slapped his leg, and laughing, said, "The most comical thing I ever saw in my life!"

"What was that, Mac?" came a half-dozen voices, and Mac was convulsed with merriment.

"The last time the Piegans raided the Crows I was out with the First Cavalry. We

were camped on the Yellowstone, and had gone to bed. I heard an Injun outside askin' about me, and pretty soon Plenty Coups comes in, sayin' the Piegans had got away with a good bunch of their ponies, but that they had found the trail crossing a little way down the river, and Big Horse and a war-band of Crows was layin' on it, and they wanted me to go 'long with them and help run it. I didn't have anything but a big government horse, and they ain't good company for Injun ponies when they are runnin' horse-thieves; besides, I didn't feel called to bust my horse helpin' Injuns out of trouble. There had got to be lots of white folks in the country, and they wa'n't at all stuck on havin' war-bands of Injuns pirootin' over the range. The Injuns wanted me to protect them from the cowboys, 'cause, you see, all Injuns look alike to a cowboy when they are runnin' over his cows. So Plenty Coups says he will give a pony, and I says, 'Mr. Injun, I will go you one.'

"I fixed up sort of warm, 'cause it was late in the fall, and threw my saddle on the pony, and joined the war-band. It was

bright moon, and we ran the trail slowly until morning; and when it come day we moved along Injun fashion, which ain't slow, if you ask me about it. We kept a-pushin' until late afternoon, when we saw the Piegans, about seven miles ahead, just streakin' it over the hills. My Injuns got off their ponies, and, Injun fashion, they stripped off every rag they had on except the G-string and moccasins. This is where them Injuns is light-minded, for no man has got any call to go flirtin' with Montana weather at that time of the year in his naked hide. Old man Mac stands pat with a full set of jeans. And then we got on them ponies and we ran them Piegans as hard as we could lather till plumb dark, when we had to quit because we couldn't see. We were in an open sage-brush country. Well, it got darker and darker, and then it began to rain. I sat on my saddle and put my saddle-blanket over my head, and I was pretty comfortable. Then it began to rain for fair. Them Injuns stamped and sung and near froze to death, and I under the blanket laughing at them. 'Long 'bout midnight it began to snow, and

"'THIS IS WHERE THEM INJUNS IS LIGHT-MINDED'"

them Injuns turned on the steam. The way they sung and stomped round in a ring tickled me near to death. The snow settled round my blanket and kept out the cold in great shape. I only had my nose out, and when it began to get gray morning I had to just yell to see them Injuns out there in five inches of snow, without a rag on, hoppin' for all they was worth. You talk about shootin' up a fellow's toes to make him dance; it wa'n't a circumstance. Them Injuns had to dance or 'cash in.' I have seen plenty of Injun dances, but that dance had a swing to it that they don't get every time.

"We got on the ponies and started back through the falling snow, tryin' to locate them annuity goods of theirn. 'Course we lost the Piegans. We lost ourselves, and we didn't find them clothes till afternoon, 'most eighteen miles back, and then we had to dig them up, and they was as stiff as *par-flèche*. Them was a funny bunch of warriors, I tell you.

"We found an old big-jaw* steer which

* A cattle disease.

some punchers had killed, and them Injuns eat that all right; but I wasn't hungry enough yet to eat big-jaw steer, so I pulled along down to the railroad. I got a piece of bread from a sheep-man, and when I got to Gray Cliffs, on the N. P., I was 'most frozen. My feet and knees were all swollen up.

"Whenever I gets to thinkin' 'bout them bucks jumpin' around out there in the snow all that night, and me a-settin' there under the blanket, I has to laugh. She was sure a funny old revel, boys."

And we listeners joined him, but we were laughing at MacNeil, not with him.

THE STORY OF THE DRY LEAVES

THE STORY OF THE DRY LEAVES

IF one loves the earth, he finds a liveliness in walking through the autumn woods: the color, the crackling, and the ripeness of the time appeal to his senses as he kicks his way through the dry leaves with his feet.

It is a wrong thing to dull this harmlessness, but still I must remind him that it was not always so; such leaves have been the cause of tragedy. How could bad come of such unoffending trifles? Listen.

Long ago a very old Indian—an Ottawa—recalled the sad case of Ah-we-ah from the nearly forgotten past. His case was similar to ours, only more serious, since if we could not approach a deer in the dry forest because of the noise the leaves made it meant only

disappointment, but with Ah-we-ah it meant his utter undoing.

Ah-we-ah grew up or came up as all Indian boys do who manage to escape the deadfalls which nature sets in such numbers and variety for them, and was at the time of the story barely a man. His folks lived in the Northwest, in what is now known as Manitoba, and they were of the Ojibbeway people. As was a very common thing in those days, they were all murdered by the Sioux; the very last kinsman Ah-we-ah had on earth was dead when Ah-we-ah came in one day from his hunting and saw their bodies lying charred and wolf-eaten about the ashes of his father's lodge.

He found himself utterly alone in the world.

The woods Indians, who followed the moose, the bear, and trapped the small animals for the Fur Company, did not live together in great tribal bodies, as did the buffalo Indians, but scattered out, the better to follow the silent methods of their livelihood.

Ah-we-ah was thus forced to live alone in the forest that winter, and his little bark hut was cold and fireless when he came in at

night, tired with the long day's hunting. This condition continued for a time, until grief and a feeling of loneliness determined Ah-we-ah to start in search of a war party, that he might accompany them against their enemies, and have an opportunity to sacrifice honorably a life which had become irksome to him.

Leaving his belongings on a "sunjegwun," or scaffold made of stout poles, he shouldered his old trade gun, his dry meat, called his wolf-dogs, and betook himself three days through the forest to the small settlement made by the hunting-camps of his tribesman, old Bent Gun,—a settlement lying about a series of ponds, of which no name is saved for this story; nor does it matter now which particular mud-holes they were—so long ago —out there in the trackless waste of poplar and tamarack.

The people are long since gone; the camps are mould; the very trees they lived among are dead and down this many a year.

So the lonely hunter came to the lodge of his friend, and sat him down on a skin, across the fire from Bent Gun; and as he dipped his hollow buffalo horn into the pot he talked

of his losses, his revenge, his war-ardor, inquired where he was like to find a fellow-feeling—yes, even pleaded with the old man that he and his sons too might go forth together with him and slay some other simple savage as a spiritual relief to themselves. He chanted his war-song by the night fire in the lodge, to the discomfort and disturbance of old Bent Gun, who had large family interests and was minded to stay in his hunting-grounds, which had yielded well to his traps and stalking; besides which the snow was deep, and the Sioux were far away. It was not the proper time of the year for war.

By day Ah-we-ah hunted with old Bent Gun, and they killed moose easily in their yards, while the women cut them up and drew them to the camps. Thus they were happy in the primeval way, what with plenty of maple-sugar, bears' grease, and the kettle always steaming full of fresh meat.

But still by night Ah-we-ah continued to exalt the nobleness of the wearing of the red paint and the shrill screams of battle to his tribesmen; but old Bent Gun did not succumb to their spirit; there was meat, and his

family were many. This finally was understood by Ah-we-ah, who, indeed, had come to notice the family, and one of them in particular—a young girl; and also he was conscious of the abundance of cheer in the teeming lodge.

In the contemplation of life as it passed before his eyes he found that his gaze centred more and more on the girl. He watched her cutting up the moose and hauling loads through the woods with her dogs. She was dutiful. Her smile warmed him. Her voice came softly, and her form, as it cut against the snow, was good to look at in the eyes of the young Indian hunter. He knew, since his mother and sister had gone, that no man can live happily in a lodge without a woman. And as the girl passed her dark eyes across his, it left a feeling after their gaze had gone. He was still glorious with the lust of murder, but a new impulse had seized him—it swayed him, and it finally overpowered him altogether.

When one day he had killed a moose early in the morning, he came back to the camp asking the women to come out and help him

in with the meat, and Mis-kau-bun-o-kwa, or the "Red Light of the Morning," and her old mother accompanied him to his quarry.

As they stalked in procession through the sunlit winter forest, the young savage gazed with glowing eyes upon the girl ahead of him. He was a sturdy man in whom life ran high, and he had much character after his manner and his kind. He forgot the scalps of his tribal enemies; they were crowded out by a higher and more immediate purpose. He wanted the girl, and he wanted her with all the fierce resistlessness of a nature which followed its inclinations as undisturbedly as the wolf—which was his totem.

The little party came presently to the dead moose, and the women, with the heavy skinning-knives, dismembered the great mahogany mass of hair, while the craunching snow under the moccasins grew red about it. Some little distance off stood the young man, leaning on his gun, and with his blanket drawn about him to his eyes. He watched the girl while she worked, and his eyes dilated and opened wide under the impulse. The blood surged and bounded through his

THE PASSION OF AH-WE-AH

veins—he was hungry for her, like a famished tiger which stalks a gazelle. They packed their sleds and hung the remainder in the trees to await another coming.

The old woman, having made her load, passed backward along the trail, tugging at her head-line and ejaculating gutturals at her dogs. Then Ah-we-ah stepped quickly to the girl, who was bent over her sled, and seizing her, he threw his blanket with a deft sweep over her head; he wrapped it around them both, and they were alone under its protecting folds. They spoke together until the old woman called to them, when he released her. The girl followed on, but Ah-we-ah stood by the blood-stained place quietly, without moving for a long time.

That night he did not speak of war to old Bent Gun, but he begged his daughter of him, and the old man called the girl and set her down beside Ah-we-ah. An old squaw threw a blanket over them, and they were man and wife.

In a day or two the young man had washed the red paint from his face, and he had a longing for his own lodge, three days away

through the thickets. It would not be so lonesome now, and his fire would always be burning.

He called his dogs, and with his wife they all betook themselves on the tramp to his hunting-grounds. The snow had long since filled up the tracks Ah-we-ah had made when he came to Bent Gun's camp.

He set up his lodge, hunted successfully, and forgot his past as he sat by the crackle of the fire, while the woman mended his buckskins, dried his moccasins, and lighted his long pipe. Many beaver-skins he had on his "sunjegwun," and many good buckskins were made by his wife, and when they packed up in the spring, the big canoe was full of stuff which would bring powder, lead, beads, tobacco, knives, axes, and stronding, or squaw-cloth, at the stores of the Northwest Company.

Ah-we-ah would have been destitute if he had not been away when his family were killed by the Sioux, and, as it was, he had little beyond what any hunter has with him; but he had saved his traps, his canoe, and his dogs, which in the old days were nearly every-

thing except the lordly gun and the store of provisions which might happen.

At a camp where many of the tribe stopped and made maple-sugar, the young pair tarried and boiled sap along with the others, until they had enough sweets for the Indian year. And when the camp broke up they followed on to the post of the big company, where they traded for the year's supplies—"double-battle Sussex powder" in corked bottles, pig-lead, blue and red stronding, hard biscuit, steel traps, axes, and knives. It is not for us to know if they helped the company's dividends by the purchase of the villanous "made whiskey," as it was called in the trade parlance, but the story relates that his canoe was deep-laden when he started away into the wilderness.

The canoe was old and worn out, so Ahwe-ah purposed to make a new one. He was young, and it is not every old man even who can make a canoe, but since the mechanical member of his family had his "fire put out" by the Sioux on that memorable occasion, it was at least necessary that he try. So he worked at its building, and in due time

launched his bark; but it was "quick" in the water, and one day shortly it tipped over with him while on his journey to his hunting-grounds. He lost all his provisions, his sugar, biscuits, and many things besides, but saved his gun. He was suffering from hunger when he again found the company's store, but having made a good hunt the year before, the factor made him a meagre credit of powder, lead, and the few necessary things. He found himself very poor.

In due course Ah-we-ah and his family set up their lodge. They were alone in the country, which had been hunted poor. The other people had gone far away to new grounds, but the young man trusted himself and his old locality. He was not wise like the wolves and the old Indians, who follow ceaselessly, knowing that to stop is to die of hunger. He hunted faithfully, and while he laid by no store, his kettle was kept full, and so the summer passed.

He now directed himself more to the hunting of beaver, of which he knew of the presence of about twenty gangs within working

distance of his camp. But when he went to break up their houses he found nearly all of them empty. He at last discovered that some distemper had seized upon the beaver, and that they had died. He recovered one which was dying in the water, and when he cut it up it had a bloody flux about the heart, and he was afraid to eat it. And so it was with others. This was a vast misfortune to the young hunter; but still there were the elk. He had shot four up to this time, and there was "sign" of moose passing about. The leaves fell, and walking in them he made a great noise, and was forced to run down an elk—a thing which could be done by a young and powerful man, but it was very exhausting.

When an Indian hunts the elk in this manner, after he starts the herd, he follows at such a gait as he thinks he can maintain for many hours. The elk, being frightened, outstrip him at first by many miles, but the Indian, following at a steady pace along the trail, at length comes in sight of them; then they make another effort, and are no more seen for an hour or two; but the intervals

in which the Indian has them in sight grow more and more frequent and longer and longer, until he ceases to lose sight of them at all. The elk are now so much fatigued that they can only move at a slow trot. At last they can but walk, by which time the strength of the Indian is nearly exhausted; but he is commonly able to get near enough to fire into the rear of the herd. This kind of hunting is what Ah-we-ah was at last compelled to do. He could no longer stalk with success, because the season was dry and the dead leaves rattled under his moccasins.

He found a band, and all day long the hungry Indian strove behind the flying elk; but he did not come up, and night found him weak and starved. He lay down by a little fire, and burned tobacco to the four corners of the world, and chanted softly his medicine-song, and devoutly hoped that his young wife might soon have meat. It might be that on his return to his lodge he would hear another voice beside that familiar one.

Ah-we-ah slept until the gray came in the east, and girding himself, he sped on through the forest; the sun came and found the buck-

"THE MOOSE COULD HEAR HIM COMING FOR AN HOUR"

skinned figure gliding through the woods. Through the dry light of the day he sweated, and in the late afternoon shot a young elk. He cut away what meat he could carry in his weakness, ate the liver raw, and with lagging steps hastened backward to his far-off lodge.

The sun was again high before Ah-we-ah raised the entrance-mat of his home, and it was some moments before he could discern in the dusk that the wife was not alone. Hunger had done its work, and the young mother had suffered more than women ought.

Her strength had gone.

The man made broth, and together they rested, these two unfortunates; but on the following day nature again interposed the strain of the tightened belly.

Ah-we-ah went forth through the noisy leaves. If rain or snow would come to soften the noise; but no; the cloudless sky overspread the yellow and red of the earth's carpet. No matter with what care the wary moccasin was set to the ground, the sweesh-sweesh of the moving hunter carried terror and warning to all animal kind. He could

not go back to the slaughtered elk; it was too far for that, and the wolf and wolverene had been there before. Through the long day no hairy or feathered kind passed before his eye. At nightfall he built his fire, and sat crooning his medicine-song until nature intervened her demands for repose.

With the early light Ah-we-ah looked on the girl and her baby.

The baby was cold.

The dry breasts of Mis-kau-bun-o-kwa had been of no purpose to this last comer, but the mother resisted Ah-we-ah when he tried to take the dead child away, and he left it. This cut and maddened the hunter's mind, and he cursed aloud his medicine-bag, and flung it from him. It had not brought him even a squirrel to stay the life of his first-born. His famished dogs had gone away, hunting for themselves; they would no longer stay by the despairing master and his dreary lodge.

Again he dragged his wretched form into the forest, and before the sun was an hour high the blue smoke had ceased to curl over the woful place, and the fainting woman lay

"THE DRY LEAVES HAD LASTED LONGER THAN SHE"

quite still on her robe. Through the dry brush and the crackling leaves ranged the starving one, though his legs bent and his head reeled. The moose could hear him for an hour.

And again at evening he returned to his bleak refuge; the hut was gray and lifeless. He dropped into his place without making a fire. He knew that the woman was going from him. From the opposite side of the wigwam she moaned weakly—he could scarcely hear her.

Ah-we-ah called once more upon his gods, to the regular thump-thump of his tomtom. It was his last effort—his last rage at fate. If the spirits did not come now, the life would soon go out of the abode of Ah-we-ah, even as the fire had gone.

He beat and sang through the doleful silence, and from the dark tamaracks the wolves made answer. They too were hungry.

The air, the leaves, the trees, were still; they listened to the low moan of the woman, to the dull thump of the tomtom, to the long piercing howl of the wolf, the low rising

and falling voice of the man chanting: "He-ah neen-gui-o-ho o-ho man-i-to-we-tah-hah gah-neen-qui-o we-i-ah-nah we-he-a."

The air grew chill and cold. Ah-we-ah was aroused from his deep communion by cold spots on his face. He opened the door-mat. He peered into the gray light of the softly falling snow. The spirits had come to him, he had a new energy, and seizing his gun, the half-delirious man tottered into the forest, saying softly to himself: "A bear—I walk like a bear myself—myself I walk like a bear—a beast comes calling—I am loaded—I am ready. Oh, my spirit! Oh, my manitou!"

A black mass crossed the Indian's path—it had not heard the moccasins in the muffle of the snow. The old trade gun boomed through the forest, and the manitou had sent at last to Ah-we-ah a black bear. He tore out his knife and cut a small load of meat from the bear, and then he strode on his back track as swiftly as he could in his weakness. He came to the hole in the forest in the middle of which sat the lodge, calling: "Mis-kau-bun-o-kwa! Mis-kau-bun-o-kwa!" but there was no answer.

He quickly lighted a fire—he threw meat upon it, and bending backward from the flame, touched her, saying, "Good bear, Mis-kau-bun-o-kwa; I have a good bear for the bud-ka-da-win—for the hunger"; but Mis-kau-bun-o-kwa could not answer Ah-we-ah. The dry leaves had lasted longer than she.

A FAILURE OF JUSTICE

A FAILURE OF JUSTICE

CAPTAIN HALLERAN of the dragoons stepped off the way freight at Alkali Flat, which sort of place has been well described as a "roaring board and canvas city"; only in justice to certain ancient adobe huts I should mention their presence.

He was on government business connected with the Indian war then raging in the Territory, and Alkali Flat was a temporary military depot piled high with crackers, bacon, cartridges, and swarming with mules, dusty men, and all the turmoil which gathers about a place where Uncle Sam dispenses dollars to his own.

The captain was a gentleman and a scholar, but he didn't look the part. What sweat and alkali dust won't do to a uniform, sleeping on the ground in it for a month or two will do, and then he was burned like a ripe

peach. This always happens to American soldiers in wars, whatever may be the case in Europe. The captain's instincts, however, had undergone no change whatever, and the dust-blown plaza did not appeal to him as he sauntered across towards the long row of one-storied shanties. There was a dismal array of signs—"The Venus," "The Medicine Queen," "The Beer Spring," "The Free and Easy"—but they did not invite the captain. There were two or three outfitting stores which relieved the business aspect, but the simple bed and board which the captain wanted was not there, unless with its tin-pan piano or gambling-chip accompaniment.

He met a man who had the local color, and asked if there was not in the town a hotel run somewhat more on the ancient lines.

"Sure there is, cap, right over to the woman's," said he, pointing. "They don't have no hell round the old woman's. That's barred in this plaza, and she can cook jes like mother. That's the old woman's over thar whar yu' see the flowers in front and the two green trees — jes nex' the Green Cloth saloon."

"THE CAPTAIN WAS A GENTLEMAN"

The captain entered the place, which was a small bar-room with a pool-table in the centre, and back of this a dining-room. Behind the bar stood a wholesome-looking woman in a white calico dress, far enough this side of middle age to make "old woman" libellous as applied to her.

"Good-evening, madam," ventured the captain, feeling that such a woman could not escape matrimony at the Flat.

"Good-evening, captain. Want some supper?"

"Yes, indeed, and I guess I will take a drink—a cocktail, if you please," as he leaned on the bar.

"Captain, the boys say I am a pretty bad bartender. I'll jes give yu' the stuff, and you can fix it up to your taste. I don't drink this, and so I don't know what men like. It's grub and beds I furnish mostly, but you can't exactly run a hotel without a bar. My customers sort of come in here and tend bar for themselves. Have a lemon-peel, captain?"

The captain comprehended, mixed and drank his cocktail, and was ushered into the

dining-room. It was half full of picturesque men in their shirt-sleeves, or in canvas and dusty boots. They were mostly red-faced, bearded, and spiked with deadly weapons. They were quiet and courteous.

Over his bottle the American is garrulous, but he handles his food with silent earnestness.

Chinamen did the waiting, and there was no noise other than the clatter of weapons, for the three-tined fork must be regarded as such. The captain fell to with the rest, and found the food an improvement on field-rations. He presently asked a neighbor about the hostess — how she managed to compete with the more pretentious resorts. Was it not a hard place for a woman to do business?

"Yes, pard, yu' might say it is rough on some of the ladies what's sportin' in this plaza, but the old woman never has no trouble." And his new acquaintance leaned over and whispered: "She's on the squar', pard; she's a plum' good woman, and this plaza sort of stands for her. She's as solid as a brick church here."

The captain's friend and he, having wrestled their ration, adjoined to the sidewalk, and the friend continued: "She was wife to an old sergeant up at the post, and he went and died. The boys here wanted a eatin'-joint, bein' tired of the local hash, which I honest can tell you was most d—— bad; so they gets her down here to ride herd on this bunch of Chinamen topside. She does pretty well for herself—gives us good grub, and all that—but she gets sort of stampeded at times over the goin's on in this plaza, and the committee has to go out and hush 'em up. Course the boys gets tangled up with their irons, and then they are packed in here, and if the old woman can't nurse 'em back to life they has to go. There is quite a little bunch of fellers here what she has set up with nights, and they got it put up that she is about the best d—— woman on the earth. They sort of stand together when any alcoholic patient gets to yellin' round the old woman's or some sportin' lady goes after the woman's hair. About every loose feller round yer has asked the old woman to marry him, which is why she ain't popular with the

ladies. She plays 'em all alike and don't seem to marry much, and this town makes a business of seein' she always lands feet first, so when any one gets to botherin', the committee comes round and runs him off the range. It sure is unhealthy fer any feller to get loaded and go jumpin' sideways round this 'dobie. Sabe?"

The captain did his military business at the quartermaster's, and then repaired to the old woman's bar-room to smoke and wait for the down freight. She was behind the bar, washing glasses.

A customer came in, and she turned to him.

"Brandy, did yu' say, John?"

"Yes, madam; that's mine."

"I don't know brandy from whiskey, John; yu' jes smell that bottle."

John put the bottle to his olfactories and ejaculated, "Try again; that ain't brandy, fer sure."

Madam produced another bottle, which stood the test, and the man poured his portion and passed out.

Alkali Flat was full of soldiers, cow-men, prospectors who had been chased out of the

hills by the Apaches, government freighters who had come in for supplies, and the gamblers and whiskey-sellers who helped them to sandwich a little hilarity into their business trips.

As the evening wore on the blood of Alkali Flat began to circulate. Next door to the old woman's the big saloons were in a riot. Glasses clinked, loud-lunged laughter and demoniac yells mixed with the strained piano, over which untrained fingers banged and pirouetted. Dancers bounded to the snapping fiddle tones of "Old Black Jack." The chips on the faro-table clattered, the red-and-black man howled, while from the streets at times came drunken whoops mingled with the haw-haws of mules over in the quartermaster's corral.

Madam looked towards the captain, saying, "Did you ever hear so much noise in your life?"

"Not since Gettysburg," replied the addressed. "My tastes are quiet, but I should think Gettysburg the most enjoyable of the two. But I suppose these people think this is great fun."

"Yes, they live so quiet out in the hills that they like to get into this bedlam when they are in town. It sort of stirs them up," explained the hostess.

"Do they never trouble you, madam?"

"No—except for this noise. I have had bullets come in here, but they wasn't meant for me. They get drunk outside and shoot wild sometimes. I tell the boys plainly that I don't want none of them to come in here drunk, and I don't care to do any business after supper. They don't come around here after dark much. I couldn't stand it if they did. I would have to pull up."

A drunken man staggered to the door of the little hotel, saw the madam behind the bar, received one look of scorn, and backed out again with a muttered "Scuse me, lady; no harm done."

Presently in rolled three young men, full of the confidence which much too much liquor will give to men. They ordered drinks at the bar roughly. Their Derby hats proclaimed them Easterners—railroad tramps or some such rubbish, thought the captain. Their conversation had the glib

vulgarity of the big cities, with many of their catch phrases, and they proceeded to jolly the landlady in a most offensive way. She tried to brave it out, until one of them reached over the bar and chucked her under the chin. Then she lifted her apron to her face and began to cry.

The wise mind of the captain knew that society at Alkali Flat worked like an naphtha-engine—by a series of explosions. And he saw a fearful future for the small bar-room.

Rising, he said, "Here, here, young men, you had better behave yourselves, or you will get killed."

Turning with a swagger, one of the hoboes said, "Ah! whose 'll kill us, youse ——— ———?"

"No, he won't!" This was shouted in a resounding way into the little room, and all eyes turned to the spot from which the voice came. Against the black doorway stood Dan Dundas—the gambler who ran the faro lay-out next door, and in his hands were two Colts levelled at the toughs, while over them gleamed steadily two blue eyes like planetary stars against the gloom of his complex-

ion. "No, he won't kill yu'; he don't have to kill yu'. I will do that."

With a hysterical scream the woman flew to her knight-errant. "Stop — stop that, Dan! Don't you shoot — don't you shoot, Dan! If you love me, Dan, don't, don't!"

With the quiet drawl of the Southwest the man in command of the situation replied: "Well, I reckon I'll sure have to, little woman. Please don't put your hand on my guns. Mabeso I won't shoot, but, Helen — but I ought to, all right. Hadn't I, captain?"

Many heads lighted up the doorway back of the militant Dan, but the captain blew a whiff of smoke towards the ceiling and said nothing.

The three young men were scared rigid. They held their extremities as the quick situation had found them. If they had not been scared, they would still have failed to understand the abruptness of things; but one found tongue to blurt:

"Don't shoot! We didn't do nothin', mister."

Another resounding roar came from Dan, "Shut up!" And the quiet was opaque.

"'STOP—STOP THAT, DAN!'"

"Yes," said the captain, as he leaned on the billiard-table, "you fellows have got through your talking. Any one can see that;" and he knocked the ash off his cigar.

"What did they do, Helen?" And Dan bent his eyes on the woman for the briefest of instants.

Up went the apron to her face, and through it she sobbed, "They chucked me under the chin, Dan, and—and one of them said I was a pretty girl—and—"

"Oh, well, I ain't sayin' he's a liar, but he 'ain't got no call for to say it. I guess we had better get the committee and lariat 'em up to a telegraph pole—sort of put 'em on the Western Union line—or I'll shoot 'em. Whatever you says goes, Helen," pleaded justice amid its perplexities.

"No, no, Dan! Tell me you won't kill 'em. I won't like you any more if you do."

"Well, I sure ought to, Helen. I can't have these yer hoboes comin' round here insultin' of my girl. Now yu' allow that's so, don't yu'?"

"Well, don't kill 'em, Dan; but I'd like to tell 'em what I think of them, though."

"Turn her loose, Helen. If yu' feel like talkin', just yu' talk. You're a woman, and it does a woman a heap of good to talk; but if yu' don't want to talk, I'll turn these guns loose, or we'll call the committee without no further remarks—jes as you like, Helen. It's your play."

The captain felt that the three hoboes were so taken up with Dan's guns that Helen's eloquence would lose its force on them. He also had a weak sympathy for them, knowing that they had simply applied the low street customs of an Eastern city in a place were customs were low enough, except in the treatment of decent women.

While Dan had command of the situation, Helen had command of Dan, and she began to talk. The captain could not remember the remarks—they were long and passionate—but as she rambled along in her denunciation, the captain, who had been laughing quietly, and quizzically admiring the scene, became suddenly aware that Dan was being more highly wrought upon than the hoboes.

He removed his cigar, and said in a low voice, "Say, Dan, don't shoot; it won't pay."

"No?" asked Dan, turning his cold, wide-open blue eyes on the captain.

"No; I wouldn't do it if I were you; you are mad, and I am not, and you had better use my judgment."

Dan looked at the hoboes, then at the woman, who had ceased talking, saying, "Will I shoot, Helen?"

"No, Dan," she said, simply.

"Well, then," he drawled, as he sheathed his weapons, "I ain't goin' to trifle round yer any more. Good-night, Helen," and he turned out into the darkness.

"Oh, Dan!" called the woman.

"What?"

"Promise me that no one kills these boys when they go out of my place; promise me, Dan, you will see to it that no one kills them. I don't want 'em killed. Promise me," she pleaded out of the door.

"I'll do it, Helen. I'll kill the first man what lays a hand on the dog-gone skunks," and a few seconds later the captain heard Dan, out in the gloom, mutter, "Well, I'll be d——!"

A more subdued set of young gentlemen

than followed Dan over to the railroad had never graced Alkali Flat.

Dan came back to his faro game, and, sitting down, shuffled the pack and meditatively put it in the box, saying to the case-keeper, "When a squar' woman gets in a game, I don't advise any bets."

But Alkali Flat saw more in the episode than the mere miscarriage of justice; the excitement had uncovered the fact that Dan Dundas and Helen understood each other.

SORROWS OF DON TOMAS PIDAL, RECONCENTRADO

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I WAS driving lately with the great Cuban "war special" Sylvester Scovel along a sun-blazoned road in the Havana province, outside of Marnion; we were away beyond the patrols of the Seventh Corps. The native soldiers pattered along the road on their rat-like ponies. To them Scovel was more than a friend: he was a friend of the great chief Gomez, and that is more than enough for a Cuban.

He pointed to a ditch and to a hill, saying he had been in fights in those places—back in Maceo's time; hot little skirmishes, with no chance to put your hat on your sword. But he had always managed to get away from the Spanish; and so had Maceo—all but the one time.

Beside the road there were fine old mansions—stuccoed brick, with open windows, and with the roofs fallen in. The rank tropic vegetation was fast growing up around them, even now choking the doorways and gravel walks. And the people who lived in them? God knows!

The day grew into noon. We were hungry, and the ardent sun suggested stopping at a village which we were passing through. There was a fonda, so we got down from our carriage, and, going in, sat down at a table in a little side-room.

One is careful about the water in Cuba, and by no chance can a dirty cook get his hands on a boiled egg. We ordered coffee and eggs. A rural Cuban fonda is very close to the earth.

Through the open window could be seen the life of the village—men sitting at tables across the way, drinking, smoking, and lazing about. It was Sunday. Little children came to the window and opened their eyes at us, and we pitied their pale anæmic faces and little puffed bellies, for that terrible order of Weyler's had been particularly hard

on children. There were men hanging about who looked equally hollow, but very few women.

"Reconcentrados—poor devils," observed my friend.

This harmless peasantry had suffered all that people could suffer. To look at them and to think of them was absolutely saddening. Still, the mass of suffering which they represented also deadened one's sensibilities somewhat, and for an ordinary man to put out his hand in help seemed a thing of no importance.

"I should like to know the personal experiences of one individual of this fallen people, Scovel. I can rise to one man, but two or three hundred thousand people is too big for me."

"All right," replied the alert "special." "We will take that Spanish-looking man over there by the cart. He has been starved, and he is a good type of a Cuban peasant." By the arts of the finished interviewer, Scovel soon had the man sitting at our table, with brandy-and-water before him. The man's eyes were like live coals, which is the

most curious manifestation of starvation. His forehead was wrinkled, the eyebrows drawn up in the middle. He had the greenish pallor which comes when the blood is thin behind a dark, coarse skin. He did not seem afraid of us, but behind the listlessness of a low physical condition there was the quick occasional movement of a wild animal.

"Reconcentrado?"

"Si, señor. I have suffered beyond counting."

"We are Americans: we sympathize with you; tell us the story of all you have suffered. Your name? Oh! Don Tomas Pidal, will you talk to us?"

"It will be nearly three rains since the King's soldiers burned the thatch over my head and the cavalry shoved us down the road like the beasts.

"I do not know what I shall do. I may yet die — it is a small affair. Everything which I had is now gone. The Americans have come to us; but they should have come long before. At this time we are not worth coming to. Nothing is left but the land, and that the Spaniards could not kill. Señor,

they of a surety would have burnt it, but that is to them impossible."

"Are you not a Spaniard by birth?"

"No; my father and mother came from over the sea, but I was born in sight of this town. I have always lived here, and I have been happy, until the war came. We did not know what the war was like. We used to hear of it years ago, but it was far to the east. The war never came to Punta Brava. We thought it never would; but it did come; and now you cannot see a thatch house or an ox, and you have to gaze hard to see any people in this country about here. That is what war does, señor, and we people here did not want war.

"Some of the valiant men who used to dwell around Punta Brava took their guns and the machete of war, and they ran away into the manigua. They used to talk in the fonda very loud, and they said they would not leave a Spaniard alive on the island. Of a truth, señor, many of those bravos have gone, they have taken many Spaniards with them to death, and between them both the people who worked in the fields died of the

hunger. They ate the oxen, they burned the thatch, and the fields are grown up with bushes. There is not a dog in Punta Brava to-day.

"When the bravos ran away, the King's soldiers came into this land in numbers as great as the flies. This village sheltered many of them—many of the battalion San Quintin—and that is why the houses are not flat with the ground."

"Why did you not go out into the manigua, Don Pidal?" was asked.

"Oh, señors, I am not brave. I never talked loud in the fonda. Besides, I had a wife and five children. I lived perfectly. I had a good house of the palm. I had ten cows of fine milk and two yokes of heavy work-oxen. There were ten pigs on my land, and two hundred chickens laid eggs for me. By the sale of these and my fruit I got money. When I killed a pig to sell in Havana, it was thirty dollars. When I did not choose to sell, we had lard in the house for a month, and I had not to buy. Two of my boys, of fourteen and sixteen years, aided me in my work. We bred the beasts, planted

tobacco, corn, sweet-potatoes, and plantains, and I had a field of the pineapples, besides many strong mango-trees. Could a man want for what I did not have? We ate twice a day, and even three times. We could have eaten all day if we had so desired.

"Then, señor, the tax-gatherers never suspected that I had fourteen hundred dollars in silver buried under the floor of my house. We could work as much as we pleased, or as little; but we worked, señor—all the men you see sitting about Punta Brava to-day worked before the war came; not for wages, but for the shame of not doing so. When the yokes were taken from the cattle at night and the fodder was thrown to them, we could divert ourselves. The young men put on their 'guayaberas,'* threw their saddles on their 'caballitos,'† and marched to the girls, where they danced and sang and made love. To get married it was only for the young man to have seventy dollars; the girl had to have only virtue. There was also to go to town to buy, and then the feast-days and the

* Fine shirts. † Little horses.

Sunday nights. There was always the work —every day the same, except in the time of tobacco; then we worked into the night. In the house the women washed, they cooked, they looked after the pigs and the chickens, they had the children, and in the time of the tobacco they also went forth into the fields.

"It was easy for any man to have money, if he did not put down much on the fighting-cocks. The church cost much; there was the cura, the sacristan—many things to pay away the money for; but even if the goods from Spain did cost a great sum, because the officers of the King made many collections on them, even if the taxes on the land and the animals were heavy, yet, señor, was it not better to pay all than to have the soldiers come? Ah me, amigo, of all things the worst are the King's soldiers. It was whispered that the soldiers of your people were bad men. It was said that if they ever came to Punta Brava we should all die; but it is not so. Your soldiers do not live in other people's houses. They are all by themselves in tents up the King's road, and they leave us alone. They do nothing but bring

us food in their big wagons. They lied about your soldiers. It was the talk in this country, señor, that the great people in the Free States of the North wanted to come to us and drive the King's soldiers out of the country, but it was said that your people quarrelled among themselves about coming. The great general who lived in Havana was said to be a friend to all of us, but he did not have the blue soldiers then. He is down the King's road now—I saw him the other day—and a man cannot see over the land far enough to come to the end of his tents.

"If they had been there one day the King's soldiers would not have come through my land and cut my boy to pieces in my own field. They did that, señor — cut him with the machetes until he was all over red, and they took many canastos of my fruits away. I went to the comandante to see what should be done, but he knew nothing about it.

"Then shortly a column of troops came marching by my house, and the officer said by word of mouth that we must all go to town, so that there would be none but rebels in the country. They burned my house and

drove all my beasts away—all but one yoke of oxen. I gathered up some of my chickens and what little I could find about the place and put it on a cart, but I could not get my money from the burning house, because they drove us away. This was the first I felt of war.

"I thought that the King would give us food, now that he had taken us from our fields, but we got nothing from the King's officers. I could even then have lived on the outside of the town, with my chickens and what I could have raised, but it was only a short time before the soldiers of the battalion took even my chickens, and they made me move inside of a wire fence which ran from one stone fort to another. I tried to get a pass to go outside of the wire fence, and for a few weeks I was used to go and gather what potatoes I could find, but so many men were cut to pieces by the guerillas as they were coming from the fields that I no longer dared go out by day.

"We had a little thatch over our heads, but it did not keep out the rain. We became weak with the hunger. We lived in

"THIS WAS THE FIRST I FELT OF WAR"

sorrow and with empty bellies. My two young children soon died, and about me many of my friends were dying like dogs. The ox-cart came in the afternoon, and they threw my two children into it like carrion. In that cart, señor, were twenty-two other dead people. It was terrible. My wife never dried her tears after that. If I had five dollars I could have gotten a box, but I did not have it. The priest would not go for less than double the price of the box, which is the custom. So my two little ones went to Guatoco on an ox-cart loaded with dead like garbage — which the Spanish comandante said we were.

"Now came the hard days, señor. Not even a dog could pick up enough in Punta Brava to keep life in his ribs. My people lay on the floor of our thatch hut, and they had not the strength to warm water in the kettle. My other child died, and again the ox-cart came. My oldest boy said he was going away and would not return. He got through the wire fence in the dark of the night, and I went with him. We got a small bunch of bananas, and in the black

night out there in the manigua we embraced each other, and he went away into the country. I have not seen him since; I no longer look for him.

"Only the strongest could live, but I had hopes that by going through the fence every few nights I could keep my wife alive. This I did many times, and came back safely; but I was as careful as a cat, señor, as I crawled through the grass, for if a soldier had shot me, my wife would then have but to die. It was hard work to gather the fruit and nuts in the night, and I could not get at all times enough. My wife grew weaker, and I began to despair of saving her. One night I stole some food in a soldier's kettle from near a mess fire, and the men of the battalion fired many shots at me, but without doing me injury. Once a Spanish guerilla, whom I had known before the war came, gave me a piece of fresh beef, which I fed to my wife. I thought to save her with the beef, but she died that night in agony. There was no flesh on her bones.

"Then I ran away through the wire fence. I could not see my wife thrown on the dead-

"'THE MEN OF THE BATTALION FIRED MANY SHOTS AT ME'"

wagon, and I never came back until a few days since. I did not care if the guerillas found me. I made my way into Havana, and I got bread from the doorways at times, enough to keep me alive. There was a little work for wages along the docks, but I was not strong to do much. One night I looked between iron bars at some people of your language, señor. They were sitting at a table which was covered with food, and when they saw me they gave me much bread, thrusting it out between the bars. A Spaniard would not do that.

"I was not born in a town, and when the King's soldiers sailed away I came back here to my own country. I did not like to live in Havana.

"But now I do not care to live here. I do not see, señor, why people who do not want war should have it. I would have paid my taxes. I did not care if the goods from Spain cost much. There was to get along without them if they were beyond price. It was said by the soldiers that we peasants out in the fields told the men of the manigua what the battalion San Quintin were doing. Señor,

the battalion San Quintin did nothing but eat and sleep in Punta Brava. The guerillas roamed about, but I never knew whence they roamed.

"The men of the manigua took my potatoes and my plantains, but, with their guns and machetes, could I make them not to take them? Was it my fault if fifty armed men did what pleased them?

"Señor, why did not the blue soldiers of your language come to us before we died?"

This we were not able to answer.

WHEN A DOCUMENT IS OFFICIAL

WHEN A DOCUMENT IS OFFICIAL

WILLIAM or "Billy" Burling had for these last four years worn three yellow stripes on his coat-sleeve with credit to the insignia. Leading up to this distinction were two years when he had only worn two, and back of that were yet other annums when his blue blouse had been severely plain except for five brass buttons down the front. This matter was of no consequence in all the world to any one except Burling, but the nine freezing, grilling, famishing years which he had so successfully contributed to the cavalry service of the United States were the "clean-up" of his assets. He had gained distinction in several pounding finishes with the Indians; he was liked in barracks and respected on the line;

and he had wrestled so sturdily with the books that when his name came up for promotion to an officer's commission he had passed the examinations. On the very morning of which I speak, a lieutenant of his company had quietly said to him: "You need not say anything about it, but I heard this morning that your commission had been signed and is now on the way from Washington. I want to congratulate you."

"Thank you," replied William Burling, as the officer passed on. The sergeant sat down on his bunk and said, mentally, "It was a damn long time coming."

There is nothing so strong in human nature as the observance of custom, especially when all humanity practises it, and the best men in America and Europe, living or dead, have approved of this one. It has, in cases like the sergeant's, been called "wetting a new commission." I suppose in Mohammedan Asia they buy a new wife. Something outrageous must be done when a military man celebrates his "step"; but be that as it may, William Burling was oppressed by a desire to blow off steam. Here is where

the four years of the three stripes stood by this hesitating mortal and overpowered the exposed human nature. Discipline had nearly throttled custom, and before this last could catch its breath again the orderly came in to tell Burling that the colonel wanted him up at headquarters.

It was early winter at Fort Adobe, and the lonely plains were white with a new snow. It certainly looked lonely enough out beyond the last buildings, but in those days one could not trust the plains to be as lonely as they looked. Mr. Sitting-Bull or Mr. Crazy-Horse might pop out of any *coulee* with a goodly following, and then life would not be worth living for a wayfarer. Some of these high-flavored romanticists had but lately removed the hair from sundry buffalo-hunters in Adobe's vicinity, and troops were out in the field trying to "kill, capture, or destroy" them, according to the ancient and honorable form. All this was well known to Sergeant Burling when he stiffened up before the colonel.

"Sergeant, all my scouts are out with the commands, and I am short of officers in post.

I have an order here for Captain Morestead, whom I suppose to be at the juncture of Old Woman's Fork and Lightning Creek, and I want you to deliver it. You can easily find their trail. The order is important, and must go through. How many men do you want?"

Burling had not put in nine years on the plains without knowing a scout's answer to that question. "Colonel, I prefer to go alone." There was yet another reason than "he travels the fastest who travels alone" in Burling's mind. He knew it would be a very desirable thing if he could take that new commission into the officers' mess with the prestige of soldierly devotion upon it. Then, too, nothing short of twenty-five men could hope to stand off a band of Indians.

Burling had flipped a mental coin. It came down heads for him, for the colonel said: "All right, sergeant. Dress warm and travel nights. There is a moon. Destroy that order if you have bad luck. Understand?"

"Very well, sir," and he took the order from the colonel's hand.

The old man noticed the figure of the young cavalryman, and felt proud to command such

a man. He knew Burling was an officer, and he thought he knew that Burling did not know it. He did not like to send him out in such weather through such a country, but needs must.

As a man Burling was at the ripe age of thirty, which is the middle distance of usefulness for one who rides a government horse. He was a light man, trim in his figure, quiet in manner, serious in mind. His nose, eyes, and mouth denoted strong character, and also that there had been little laughter in his life. He had a mustache, and beyond this nothing can be said, because cavalrymen are primitive men, weighing no more than one hundred and sixty pounds. The horse is responsible for this, because he cannot carry more, and that weight even then must be pretty much on the same ancient lines. You never see long, short, or odd curves on top of a cavalry horse—not with nine years of field service.

Marching down to the stables, he gave his good bay horse quite as many oats as were good for him. Then going to his quarters, he dressed himself warmly in buffalo coat,

buffalo moccasins, fur cap and gloves, and he made one saddle-pocket bulge with coffee, sugar, crackers, and bacon, intending to fill the opposite side with grain for his horse. Borrowing an extra six-shooter from Sergeant McAvoy, he returned to the stables and saddled up. He felt all over his person for a place to put the precious order, but the regulations are dead set against pockets in soldiers' clothes. He concluded that the upper side of the saddle-bags, where the extra horseshoes go, was a fit place. Strapping it down, he mounted, waved his hand at the fellow-soldiers, and trotted off up the road.

It was getting towards evening, there was a fine brisk air, and his horse was going strong and free. There was no danger until he passed the Frenchman's ranch where the buffalo-hunters lived; and he had timed to leave there after dark and be well out before the moon should discover him to any Indians who might be viewing that log house with little schemes of murder in expectance.

He got there in the failing light, and tying

his horse to the rail in front of the long log house, he entered the big room where the buffalo-hunters ate, drank, and exchanged the results of their hard labor with each other as the pasteboards should indicate. There were about fifteen men in the room, some inviting the bar, but mostly at various tables guessing at cards. The room was hot, full of tobacco smoke and many democratic smells, while the voices of the men were as hard as the pounding of two boards together. What they said, for the most part, can never be put in your library, neither would it interest if it was. Men with the bark on do not say things in their lighter moods which go for much; but when these were behind a sage-bush handling a Sharps, or skimming among the tailing buffaloes on a strong pony, what grunts were got out of them had meaning!

Buffalo-hunters were men of iron endeavor for gain. They were adventurers; they were not nice. Three buckets of blood was four dollars to them. They had thews, strong-smelling bodies, and eager minds. Life was red on the buffalo-range in its day. There

was an intellectual life—a scientific turn—but it related to flying lead, wolfish knowledge of animals, and methods of hide-stripping.

The sergeant knew many of them, and was greeted accordingly. He was feeling well. The new commission, the dangerous errand, the fine air, and the ride had set his blood bounding through a healthy frame. A young man with an increased heart action is going to do something besides standing on one foot leaning against a wall: nature arranged that long ago.

Without saying what he meant, which was "let us wet the new commission," he sang out: "Have a drink on the army. Kem up, all you hide-jerkers," and they rallied around the young soldier and "wet." He talked with them a few minutes, and then stepped out into the air—partly to look at his horse, and partly to escape the encores which were sure to follow. The horse stood quietly. Instinctively he started to unbuckle the saddle-pocket. He wanted to see how the "official document" was riding, that being the only thing that oppressed Burling's mind.

But the pocket was unbuckled, and a glance showed that the paper was gone.

His bowels were in tremolo. His heart lost three beats; and then, as though to adjust matters, it sent a gust of blood into his head. He pawed at his saddle-bags; he unbuttoned his coat and searched with nervous fingers everywhere through his clothes; and then he stood still, looking with fixed eyes at the nigh front foot of the cavalry horse. He did not stand mooning long; but he thought through those nine years, every day of them, every minute of them; he thought of the disgrace both at home and in the army; he thought of the lost commission, which would only go back the same route it came. He took off his overcoat and threw it across the saddle. He untied his horse and threw the loose rein over a post. He tugged at a big sheath-knife until it came from the back side of his belt to the front side, then he drew two big army revolvers and looked at the cylinders—they were full of gray lead. He cocked both, laid them across his left arm, and stepped quickly to the door of the Frenchman's log house. As he backed into

the room he turned the key in the lock and put it under his belt. Raising the revolvers breast-high in front of him, he shouted, "Attention!" after the loud, harsh habit of the army. An officer might talk to a battalion on parade that way.

No one had paid any attention to him as he entered. They had not noticed him, in the preoccupation of the room, but every one quickly turned at the strange word.

"Throw up your hands instantly, every man in the room!" and with added vigor, "Don't move!"

Slowly, in a surprised way, each man began to elevate his hands—some more slowly than others. In settled communities this order would make men act like a covey of quail, but at that time at Fort Adobe the six-shooter was understood both in theory and in practice.

"You there, bartender, be quick! I'm watching you." And the bartender exalted his hands like a practised saint.

"Now, gentlemen," began the soldier, "the first man that bats an eye or twitches

"'NO. I AM NOT LOCO'"

a finger or moves a boot in this room will get shot just that second. Sabe?"

"What's the matter, Mr. Soldier? Be you *loco?*" sang out one.

"No, I am not *loco.* I'll tell you why I am not." Turning one gun slightly to the left, he went on: "You fellow with the long red hair over there, you sit still if you are not hunting for what's in this gun. I rode up to this shack, tied my horse outside the door, came in here, and bought the drinks. While I was in here some one stepped out and stole a paper—official document—from my saddle-pockets, and unless that paper is returned to me, I am going to turn both of these guns loose on this crowd. I know you will kill me, but unless I get the paper I want to be killed. So, gentlemen, you keep your hands up. You can talk it over; but remember, if that paper is not handed me in a few minutes, I shall begin to shoot." Thus having delivered himself, the sergeant stood by the door with his guns levelled. A hum of voices filled the room.

"The soldier is right," said some one.

"Don't point that gun at me; I hain't

got any paper, pardner. I can't even read paper, pard. Take it off; you might git narvous."

"That sojer's out fer blood. Don't hold his paper out on him."

"Yes, give him the paper," answered others. "The man what took that paper wants to fork it over. This soldier means business. Be quick."

"Who's got the paper?" sang a dozen voices. The bartender expostulated with the determined man—argued a mistake—but from the compressed lips of desperation came the word "Remember!"

From a near table a big man with a gray beard said: "Sergeant, I am going to stand up and make a speech. Don't shoot. I am with you." And he rose quietly, keeping an inquisitive eye on the Burling guns, and began:

"This soldier is going to kill a bunch of people here; any one can see that. That paper ain't of no account. Whatever did any fool want to steal it for? I have been a soldier myself, and I know what an officer's paper means to a despatch-bearer. Now,

men, I say, after we get through with this mess, what men is alive ought to take the doggone paper-thief, stake the feller out, and build a slow fire on him, if he can be ridden down. If the man what took the paper will hand it up, we all agree not to do anything about it. Is that agreed?"

"Yes, yes, that's agreed," sang the chorus.

"Say, boss, can't I put my arms down?" asked a man who had become weary.

"If you do, it will be forever," came the simple reply.

Said one man, who had assembled his logistics: "There was some stompin' around yar after we had that drink on the sojer. Whoever went out that door is the feller what got yer document; and ef he'd a-took-en yer horse, I wouldn't think much—I'd be lookin' fer that play, stranger. But to go *cincha* a piece of paper! Well, I think you must be plumb *loco* to shoot up a lot of men like we be fer that yar."

"Say," remarked a natural observer—one of those minds which would in other places have been a head waiter or some other highly sensitive plant—"I reckon that Injun over

thar went out of this room. I seen him go out."

A little French half-breed on Burling's right said, "Maybe as you keel de man what 'ave 'and you de papier—hey?"

"No, on my word I will not," was the promise, and with that the half-breed continued: "Well, de papier ees een ma pocket. Don't shoot."

The sergeant walked over to the abomination of a man, and putting one pistol to his left ear, said, "Give it up to me with one fist only—mind, now!" But the half-breed had no need to be admonished, and he handed the paper to Burling, who gathered it into the grip of his pistol hand, crushing it against the butt.

Sidling to the door, the soldier said, "Now I am going out, and I will shoot any one who follows me." He returned one gun to its holster, and while covering the crowd, fumbled for the key-hole, which he found. He backed out into the night, keeping one gun at the crack of the door until the last, when with a quick spring he dodged to the right, slamming the door.

The room was filled with a thunderous roar, and a dozen balls crashed through the door.

He untied his horse, mounted quickly with the overcoat underneath him, and galloped away. The hoof-beats reassured the buffalo-hunters; they ran outside and blazed and popped away at the fast-receding horseman, but to no purpose. Then there was a scurrying for ponies, and a pursuit was instituted, but the grain-fed cavalry horse was soon lost in the darkness. And this was the real end of Sergeant William Burling.

The buffalo-hunters followed the trail next day. All night long galloped and trotted the trooper over the crunching snow, and there was no sound except when the moon-stricken wolves barked at his horse from the gray distance.

The sergeant thought of the recent occurrence. The reaction weakened him. His face flushed with disgrace; but he knew the commission was safe, and did not worry about the vengeance of the buffalo-hunters, which was sure to come.

At daylight he rested in a thick timbered

bottom, near a cut bank, which in plains strategy was a proper place to make a fight. He fed himself and his horse, and tried to straighten and smooth the crumpled order on his knee, and wondered if the people at Adobe would hear of the unfortunate occurrence. His mind troubled him as he sat gazing at the official envelope; he was in a brown study. He could not get the little sleep he needed, even after three hours' halt. Being thus preoccupied, he did not notice that his picketed horse from time to time raised his head and pricked his ears towards his back track. But finally, with a start and a loud snort, the horse stood eagerly watching the bushes across the little opening through which he had come.

Burling got on his feet, and untying his lariat, led his horse directly under the cut bank in some thick brush. As he was in the act of crawling up the bank to have a look at the flat plains beyond, a couple of rifles cracked and a ball passed through the soldier's hips. He dropped and rolled down the bank, and then dragged himself into the brush.

From all sides apparently came Indians'

"THE BUFFALO-HUNTERS KNEW BY THE 'SIGN' ON THE TRAIL."

"Ki-yis" and "coyote yelps." The cavalry horse trembled and stood snorting, but did not know which way to run. A great silence settled over the snow, lasting for minutes. The Sioux crawled closer, and presently saw a bright little flare of fire from the courier's position, and they poured in their bullets, and again there was quiet. This the buffalo-hunters knew later by the "sign" on the trail. To an old hunter there is no book so plain to read as footprints in the snow.

And long afterwards, in telling about it, an old Indian declared to me that when they reached the dead body they found the ashes of some paper which the soldier had burned, and which had revealed his position. "Was it his medicine which had gone back on him?"

"No," I explained, "it wasn't his medicine, but the great medicine of the white man, which bothered the soldier so."

"Hump! The great Washington medicine maybeso. It make dam fool of soldiers lots of time I know 'bout," concluded "Bear-in-the-Night," as he hitched up his blanket around his waist.

THE WHITE FOREST

THE WHITE FOREST

FROM the mid-winter mist and mush of New York it was a transformation to us standing there in the smoking-room of the Château Frontenac at Quebec, looking down across the grand reaches of the St. Lawrence, where the ice ran in crashing fields through the streaming water of the flood-tide. It was a cheerful view from a cheerful place, though the frost was on the pane, and the wood-work popped with the cold. Down in the street the little Canadian horses, drawing their loads, were white with rime, while their irrepressible French drivers yelled at each other until we could hear them through the double windows. There is energy in this fierce Northern air.

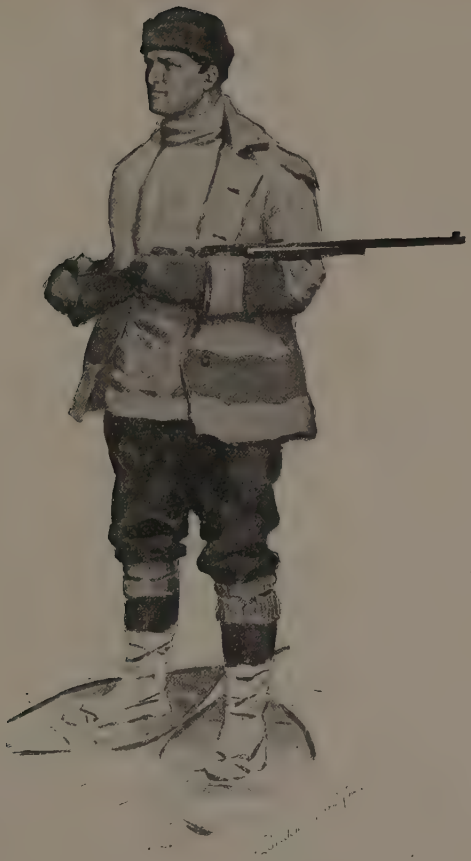
"Why Florida in winter? Why not Quebec?" said the old Yale stroke.

"Yes, why not?" reiterated the Essex trooper.

But the cosiness of the château did not suggest the seriousness of our purpose. We wanted to get out on the snow—to get in the snow — to tempt its moods and feel its impulses. We wanted to feel the nip of that keen outside air, to challenge a contest with our woollens, and to appropriate some of its energy. Accordingly we consulted a wise mind who sold snow-shoes, blankets, moccasins, and socks, and he did a good business.

"Shall we dress at St. Raymond or in the château?" said my companion, mindful of the severity of convention in New York, as he gazed on the litter of his new garments spread out on the floor of our room.

"We will dress here, and leave so early that Quebec will not be out of bed until we are away; but if Quebec were awake and on the streets, Quebec would not turn its head to honor our strangeness with a glance, because it would see nothing new in us;" and dress we did. We only put on three pairs of socks and one pair of flannel-lined moccasins, but we were taught later to put on all we had. As the rich man said to the reporter, when trying to explain the magnitude



THE OLD YALE STROKE

of his coming ball, "There will be ten thousand dollars' worth of ice-cream," so I say to you we had forty dollars' worth of yarn socks.

We had bags of blankets, hunks of fresh beef and pork, which had to be thawed for hours before cooking, and potatoes in a gunny sack, which rattled like billiard-balls, so hard were they frozen. We found great amusement on the train by rattling the bag of potatoes, for they were the hardest, the most dense things known to science.

The French drivers of the burleaus who deposited us at the train took a cheery interest in our affairs; they lashed the horses, yelled like fiends, made the snow fly around the corners, nearly ran down an early policeman, and made us happy with the animation. They are rough children, amazingly polite—a product of paternalism—and comfortable folks to have around, only you must be careful not to let them succeed in their childish endeavor to drive their horses over you. Anyway, they cheered us off through the softly falling snow of that early winter morning, and made us feel less like strangers.

At St. Raymond were the guides and little

one-horse burleaus all ready for the trip to the "bush," or at least for the fifteen miles, which was as far as sleighs could go, up to old man O'Shannahan's, which is the first camp of the club. There were nearly four feet of snow on the ground, so that the regular road between the fences was drifted full, compelling the *habitants* to mark out another way with evergreen trees through their fields.

Far apart over the white landscape are set the little French cottages, with their curved roofs. They are so cosily lonely, and the rough hills go up from the valley to further isolate them. Coming along the road we met the low hauling-sleds of the natives, who ran their horses off the road into the snow halfway up their horses' sides; but the sledges were flat, and floated, as it were. Picturesque fellows, with tuques, red sashes, and fur coats, with bronzed faces, and whiskers worn under their chin, after the fashion of the early thirties. The Quebec *habitants* don't bother their heads about the new things, which is the great reason why they are the most contented people in America.

The faithful watch-dog barked at us from

"THE SERIOUSNESS OF FOUR FEET OF SNOW"

every cottage, and, after the manner of all honest house-dogs, charged us, with skinned lips and gleaming eye. We waited until they came near to the low-set burleau, when we menaced them with the whip, whereat they sprang from the hard road into the soft snow, going out of sight in it, where their floundering made us laugh loud and long. Dogs do not like to be laughed at, and it is so seldom one gets even with the way-side pup.

At O'Shannahan's we were put up in the little club cabin and made comfortable. I liked everything in the country except the rough look of the hills, knowing, as I do, that all the game in America has in these latter days been forced into them, and realizing that to follow it the hunter must elevate himself over the highest tops, which process never became mixed in my mind with the poetry of mountain scenery.

We essayed the snow-shoes—an art neglected by us three people since our boyhood days. It is like horseback-riding—one must be at it all the time if he is to feel comfortable. Snow-shoes must be understood, or they will not get along with you.

Bebé Larette laughingly said, "Purty soon you mak de snow-shoe go more less lak dey was crazee."

Having arranged to haul the supplies into the "bush" next day, we lay down for the night in the warm cabin, tucked in and babied by our generous French guides. The good old Irishman, Mr. O'Shannahan, was the last to withdraw.

"Mr. O'Shannahan, what do the French say for 'good-night'?"

"Well, som' o' thim says 'Bung-sware,' and som' o' thim says 'Bung way';" but none of them, I imagine, say it just like Mr. O'Shannahan.

With the daylight our hut began to abound with the activities of the coming day. A guide had a fire going, and Mr. O'Shannahan stood warming himself beside it. The Essex trooper, having reduced himself to the buff, put on an old pair of moccasins and walked out into the snow. The New Jersey thermometer which we had brought along may not have as yet gotten acclimated, but it solemnly registered 5° below zero.

"Bebé, will you kindly throw a bucket of

THE ESSEX TROOPER

water over my back?" he asked; but Bebé might as well have been asked to kindly shoot the Essex trooper with a gun, or to hit him with an axe. Bebé would have neither ice-water, rifle, nor axe on his pious soul.

I knew the stern requirements of the morning bath, and dowsed him with the desired water, when he capered into the cabin and began with his crash towel to rub for the reaction. Seeing that Mr. O'Shannahan was perturbed, I said:

"What do you think of that act?"

"Oi think a mon is ez will aff be the soide av this stove as to be havin' the loikes av yez poor ice-wather down his spoine."

Mr. O'Shannahan reflected and hunched nearer the box-stove, saying: "It's now gaun a year, but oi did say a mon do mooch the loikes av that wan day. He divisted himself av his last stitch, an' dayliber*ate*ly wint out an' rowled himsilf in the snow. That before brikfast, moind ye. Oi've no doobt he's long since dead. Av the loikes av this t'ing do be goan an, an' is rayparted down en the Parliamint, they'll be havin' a law fer it — more's the nade."

After breakfast a hundred pounds of our war material was loaded on each toboggan. We girded on our snow-shoes and started out to break trail for the sledges. I know of no more arduous work. And while the weather was very cold, Mr. O'Shannahan nearly undressed us before he was satisfied at our condition for bush-ranging. We sank from eight to ten inches in the soft snow. The raising of the snow-burdened racket tells on lung and ankle and loin with killing force. Like everything else, one might become accustomed to lugging say ten pounds extra on each set of toes, but he would have to take more than a day at it. The perspiration comes in streams, which showed the good of O'Shannahan's judgment. Besides, before we had gone three miles we began to understand the mistake of not wearing our forty dollars' worth of socks. Also we had our moccasins on the outside, or next to the snow-shoes. They got damp, froze into something like sheet-iron, and had a fine ice-glaze on their bottoms which made them slip and slide backward and forward on the snow-shoes.

THE HOT FINISH IN THE SNOW-SHOE RACE

After three miles, Bebé readjusted and tied my moccasins, when Oliver, the cook, who was a very intelligent man, mopped his forehead with his shirt-sleeve and observed:

"Excuse me, I t'ink you bettair go back dose cabain — you are not fix hup more propair for dees beesness. Ma dear fren', dose man een Quebec what sol' you dose t'ing"—and here his quiet, patient personality was almost overcome, this human reflection of the long Northern winter could not calm himself, so he blurted, in his peaceful way — "dose man een Quebec dey weare know not'ing."

We were in the light of a great truth—the shoes would not stay on—the thongs cut our toes—we had outlived our usefulness as trail-breakers, and we succumbed. The back track was one of my greatest misfortunes in life, but it was such a measly lot of cold-finger, frozen-toe, slip-down detail that I will forbear. My companions were equally unfortunate; so when we finally fell into the arms of Mr. O'Shannahan, he said:

"Ah, a great hardship. Oi will make that matter plain to yez."

The sledges had deposited their loads halfway up the trail, the guides coming back for the night.

Next morning the remainder of our stuff was loaded, and with renewed faith we strode forth. The snow-shoes were now all right, and, with five pairs of socks apiece — one outside the moccasins — the thongs could not eat our toes. We took photographs of our moccasins—unwholesome, swollen things —and dedicated the plates to Mr. Kipling as "the feet of the young men."

The country of the Little Saguenay is as rough as any part of the Rocky Mountains. It is the custom to dress lightly for travelling, notwithstanding the 20° below zero, and even then one perspires very freely, making it impossible to stop long for a rest, on account of the chill of the open pores. Ice forms on eyebrow, hair, and mustache, while the sweat freezes in scales on the back of one's neck. The snow falls from the trees on the voyager, and melting slightly from the heat of the body, forms cakes of ice. Shades of Nansen and all the Arctic men! I do not understand why they are

CARIBOU TRACK

not all pillars of ice, unless it be that there are no trees to dump snow on them. The spruce and hemlock of these parts all point upward as straight as one could set a lance, to resist the constant fall of snow. If one leaned ever so little out of the perpendicular, it could not survive the tremendous average of fifty feet of snowfall each winter. Their branches, too, do not grow long, else they would snap under the weight. Every needle on the evergreens has its little burden of white, and without intermission the snow comes sifting down from the sky through the hush of the winter. When we stopped, and the creak of the snow-shoes was still, we could almost hear our hearts beat. We could certainly hear the cracking of the tobacco burning in our pipes. It had a soothing, an almost seductive influence, that muffle of snow. So solemn is it, so little you feel yourself, that it is a consciousness which brings unconsciousness, and the calm white forest is almost deadening in its beauty. The winter forest means death.

Then came the guides dragging their toboggans, and we could hear them pant and

grunt and creak and slip; how they manage the fearful work is quite beyond me. Used to it, I suppose. So are pack-mules; but think of the generations of suffering behind this which alone makes it possible. The men of the pack, the paddle, snow-shoe, toboggán, and axe do harder, more exhausting work than any other set of people; they are nearer to the primitive strain against the world of matter than are other men — they are the "wheelers," so to speak.

The last stage up the mountain was a lung-burster, but finally we got to a lake, which was our objective. It was smooth.

"Let us take off these instruments of torture and rest our feet on the smooth going," said we, in our innocence, and we undid a snow-shoe each. The released foot went into the snow up to our middles, and into water besides. We resumed our snow-shoe, but the wet moccasins coming in contact with the chill air became as iron. Our frozen snow-shoe thongs were wires of steel. Our hands were cold with the work of readjustment, our bodies chilled with the waiting. It was a bad half-hour before the cabin was

HAULING THE TOBOGGANS

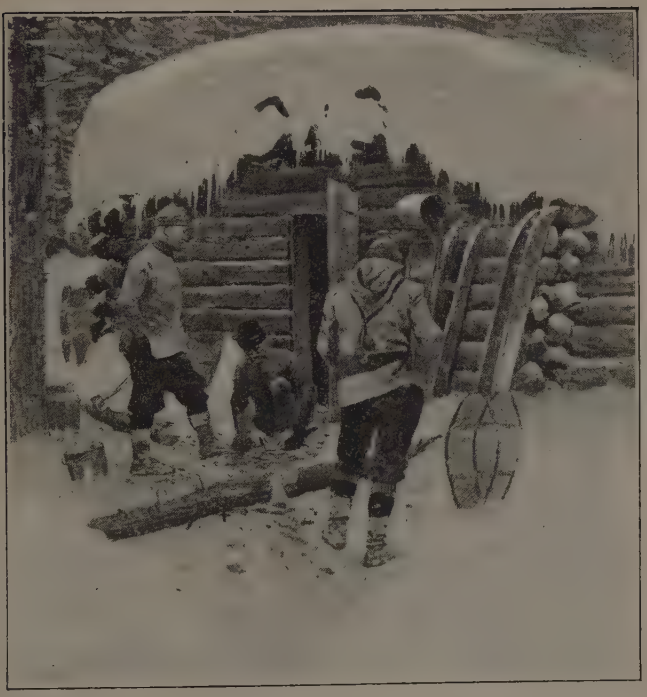
reached. We built a fire, but the provisions had not come up, so we sat around and gazed with glaring eyes at each other. The Essex trooper and I talked of eating the old Yale stroke, who was our companion, but we agreed he was too tough. I was afraid for a time that a combination might be made against me on those lines, but luckily the toboggans arrived.

The log cabin was seventeen feet square, so what with the room taken by the bunks, box-stove, our provender and dunnage, the lobby of the house was somewhat crowded. There were three Americans and five Frenchmen. The stove was of the most excitable kind, never satisfied to do its mere duty, but threatening a holocaust with every fresh stick of wood. We made what we called "atmospheric cocktails" by opening the door and letting in one part of 20° below zero air to two parts of 165° above zero air, seasoned with French bitters. It had the usual effect of all cocktails; we should much have preferred the "straight goods" at, say, 70°.

In the morning we began a week's work

at caribou-hunting. It is proper to state at this interval that this article can have no "third act," for success did not crown our efforts. We scoured the woods industriously behind our India-rubber, leather-lunged guides, with their expert snow-shoeing, and saw many caribou; but they saw us first, or smelled us, or heard us, and, with the exception of two "clean misses," we had no chance. It may be of interest to tell what befalls those who "miss," according to the rough law of the cabin. The returning hunter may deny it vigorously, but the grinning of the guide is ample testimony for conviction. The hunter is led to the torture tree. All the men, cook included, pour out of the cabin and line up. The "misser" is required to assume a very undignified posture, when all the men take a hack at him with a frozen moccasin. It is rude fun, but the howls of laughter ring through the still forest, and even the unfortunate sportsman feels that he has atoned for his deed.

Bebé Larette killed a young caribou, which was brought into camp for our observation. It was of a color different from what we had



THE CABIN

expected, darker on the back, blacker on the muzzle, and more the color of the tree trunks among which it lives. Indeed, we had it frozen and set up in the timber to be photographed and painted. Standing there, it was almost invisible in its sameness.

Its feet were the chief interest, for we had all seen and examined its tracks. If one puts his hand down into the track, he will find a hard pillar of snow which is compressed by their cup-like feet; and more striking still is it that the caribou does not sink in the snow as far as our big snow-shoes, not even when it runs, which it is able to do in four feet of snow with the speed of a red deer on dry ground. In these parts the caribou has no enemy but man: the wolf and the panther do not live here, though the lynx does, but I could not learn that he attacks the caribou.

From Mr. Whitney's accounts, I was led to believe the caribou was a singularly stupid beast, which he undoubtedly is in the Barren Grounds. For sportsmen who hunt in the fall of the year he is not regarded as especially difficult—he is easily shot from boats around

ponds; but to kill a caribou in the Laurentian Mountains in midwinter is indeed a feat. This is due to the deathly stillness of the winter forest, and the snow-shoeing difficulties which beset even the most clever sportsman.

This brings to my mind the observation that snow-shoeing, as a hunter is required to do it when on the caribou track, has the same relationship to the "club snow-shoe run," so called, that "park riding" has to "punching cows." The men of the "bush" have short and broad oval shoes, and they must go up and down the steepest imaginable places, and pass at good speed and perfect silence through the most dense spruce and tamarack thickets, for there the caribou leads. The deep snow covers up the small evergreen bushes, but they resist it somewhat, leaving a soft spot, which the hunter is constantly falling into with fatal noise. If he runs against a tree, down comes an avalanche of snow, which sounds like thunder in the quiet.

I was brought to a perfectly fresh track of three caribou by two guides, and taking the trail, we found them not alarmed, but travelling rapidly. So "hot" was the trail that I

ICE-FISHING

removed the stocking from my gun-breech. We moved on with as much speed as we could manage in silence. The trees were cones of snow, making the forest dense, like soft-wood timber in summer. We were led up hills, through dense hemlock thickets, where the falling snow nearly clogged the action of my rifle and filled the sights with ice. I was forced to remove my right mitten to keep them ice-clear by warming with the bare hand. The snow-shoeing was difficult and fatiguing to the utmost, as mile after mile we wound along after those vagrant caribou. We found a small pond where they had pawed for water, and it had not yet frozen after their drink.

Now is the time when the hunter feels the thrill which is the pleasure of the sport.

Down the sides of the pond led the trail, then twisting and turning, it entered the woods and wound up a little hill. Old man Larette fumbled the snow with his bare hand; he lifted towards us some unfrozen spoor—good, cheerful old soul, his eyes were those of a panther. Now we set our shoes ever so carefully, pressing them down slowly, and

shifting our weight cautiously lest the footing be false. The two hunters crouched in the snow, pointing. I cocked my rifle; one snow-shoe sunk slowly under me — the snow was treacherous — and three dark objects flitted like birds past the only opening in the forest, seventy-five yards ahead.

"Take the gun, Con," I said, and my voice broke on the stillness harshly: the game was up, the disappointment keen. The reaction of disgust was equal to the suppressed elation of the second before. "Go to camp the nearest way, Larette."

The country was full of caribou. They travel constantly, not staying in one section. New tracks came every day into our little territory. We stalked and worked until our patience gave out, when we again loaded our toboggans for the back track.

At Mr. O'Shannahan's we got our burleaus, and jingled into St. Raymond by the light of the moon.

THEY BORE A HAND

THEY BORE A HAND

WHEN Mrs. Kessel, with the two children, saw the troops pack up and entrain their horses, she had plenty of things to do for the major besides control her feelings. It had happened so many times before that it was not a particularly distinct sensation; but the going forth of an armed man is always thrilling — yes, even after twenty years of it. She did not think, I imagine, but she knew many wives of regular army officers whom Congress had forgotten after the dead heroes had been heralded up and down the land and laid away. The "still, small voice" of the army widow doesn't make the halls of Congress yell with rage at the stern facts. But she was accustomed, since the year of their marriage, to the departure of her besabred husband, and that was the

"worse" for which she married him. The eldest girl was as near twenty as I can tell about such things. They were excited by the fast moving of events, and the flash of steel had benumbed their reflective quality, but papa was a soldier, and Spain had to be licked. Who could do it better than papa, Oestreicher, his orderly trumpeter, and the gallant Third, those nimble athletes who took the three bareback horses over the hurdles in the riding-hall? Who could withstand the tearing charge down the parade with the white blades flashing? Nothing but Oestreicher with his trumpet could stop that.

Oestreicher had told them a thousand times that papa could lick any one under any conceivable circumstances. They very well knew that he had followed the flying Arapaho village far into the night, until he had captured everything; they were familiar with the niceties of the Apache round-up at San Carlos, because Oestreicher had handed the major a six-shooter at the particular instant, and the terrible ten days' battle with the revengeful Cheyennes, when the snow was up to the horses' bellies, had been done to death by

the orderly. Papa had been shot before, but it hadn't killed him, and they had never heard of "Yellow-Jack" on the high plains. Papa did all this with Oestreicher to help him, to be sure, for the orderly always declared himself a full partner in the major's doings, and divided the glory as he thought best.

Oestreicher, orderly trumpeter, was white and bald. He never stated any recollections of the time before he was a soldier. He was a typical German of the soldier class; a fierce red in the face, illuminated by a long, yellowish-white mustache, but in body becoming a trifle wobbly with age. He had been following the guidon for thirty-seven years. That is a long time for a man to have been anything, especially a trooper.

Oh yes, it cannot be denied that Oestreicher got drunk on pay-days and state occasions, but he was too old to change; in his day that thing was done. Also, he had love-affairs of no very complex nature. They were never serious enough for the girls to hear of. Also, he had played the various financial allurements of the adjoining town, until his "final statement" would be the

month's pay then due. But this bold humanity welled up in Oestreicher thoroughly mixed with those soft virtues which made every one come to him when he was in trouble. He was a professional soldier, who knew no life outside a Sibley or a barrack, except the major's home, which he helped the major to run. To the girls this had been always so. On the drill-ground the major undoubtedly had to be taken into account, but at the major's quarters Oestreicher had so close an alliance with madam and the girls that the "old man" made a much smaller impression. A home always should be a pure democracy.

The Kessel outfit was like this: It was "military satrap" from the front door out, but inside it was "the most lovable person commands," and Oestreicher often got this assignment.

In the barracks Oestreicher was always "Soda"—this was an old story, which may have related to his hair, or his taste, or an episode—but no man in the troop knew why. When they joined, Oestreicher was "Soda," and traditions were iron in the Third.

Oestreicher and the major got along with-

out much friction. After pay-day the major would say all manner of harsh things about the orderly because he was away on a drunk, but in due time Oestreicher would turn up smiling. Madam and the girls made his peace, and the major subsided. He had got mad after this manner at this man until it was a mere habit, so the orderly trumpeter never came up with the court-martialling he so frequently courted, for which that worthy was duly grateful, and readily forgave the major his violent language.

For days Oestreicher and the women folks had been arranging the major's field kit. The major looked after the troops and the trumpeter looked after the major, just as he had for years and years before. When the train was about to pull out, the major kissed away his wife's tears and embraced his children, while Oestreicher stood by the back door of the Pullman, straight and solemn.

"Now look out for the major," solicited the wife, while the two pretty girls pulled the tall soldier down and printed two kisses on his red-burnt cheeks, which he received in a disciplined way.

"Feed Shorty and Bill [dogs] at four o'clock in the afternoon, and see that they don't get fed out of mess hours," said the orderly to the girls, and the women got off the cars.

And Oestreicher never knew that madam had told the major to look out well for the orderly, because he was old, and might not stand things which he had in the earlier years. That did not matter, however, because it was all a day's work to the toughened old soldier. The dogs, the horses, the errands, the girls, the major, were habits with him, and as for the present campaign—he had been on many before. It gave only a slight titillation.

Thus moved forth this atom of humanity with his thousands of armed countrymen to do what had been done before—set the Stars and Stripes over the frontier and hold them there. Indians, greasers, Spaniards—it was all the same, just so the K Troop guidon was going that way.

The "shave-tails" could kick and cuss at the criminal slowness of the troop train's progress, but Oestreicher made himself comfortable with his pipe and newspaper, wondering what kind of cousins Spaniards were

to Mexicans, and speculating with another old yellow-leg on the rough forage of Cuba.

So he progressed with the well-known events to Tampa and to Daiquiri, and here he fell over a very bad hurdle. He could brown hardtack in artful ways, he did not mind the mud, he could blow a trumpet to a finish, he could ride a horse as far as the road was cut out, but the stiffened knees of the old cavalryman were badly sprung under the haversack and blanket-roll afoot.

The column was well out on the road to Siboney, when the major noted the orderly's distress: "Oestreicher, fall out—go back to the transport. You can't keep up. I will give you an order," which he did.

The poor old soldier fell to the rear of the marching men and sat down on the grass. He was greatly depressed, both in body and mind, but was far from giving up. As he sat brooding, he noticed a ragged Cuban coming down the road on a flea-bitten pony, which was heavily loaded with the cast-off blankets of the volunteers. A quick, lawless thought energized the broken man, and he shoved a shell into his Krag carbine. Rising

slowly, he walked to meet the ragged figure. He quickly drew a bead on the sable patriot, saying, "Dismount—get down—you d—— greaser!"

"No entiendo."

"Get down."

"Por Dios, hombre, que va hacer?" and at this juncture Oestreicher poked the Cuban in the belly with his carbine, and he slid off on the other side.

"Now run along—vamoose—underlay—get a gait on you," sang out the blue soldier, while the excited Cuban backed up the road, waving his hands and saying, "Bandolero, ladrone, sin verguenza—porque me roba el caballo?"

To which Oestreicher simply said, "Oh hell!"

Not for a second did Oestreicher know that he was a high agent of the law. Be it known that any man who appropriates property of your Uncle Samuel can be brought to book. It is hard to defend his actions, when one considers his motive and the horse.

The final result was that Oestreicher appeared behind the Third Cavalry, riding

"'DISMOUNT—GET DOWN'"

nicely, with his blanket-roll before his saddle. The troops laughed, and the major looked behind; but he quickly turned away, grinning, and said to Captain Hardier: "Look at the d—— old orderly! If that isn't a regular old-soldier trick! I'm glad he has a mount; you couldn't lose him."

"Yes," replied the addressed, "you can order Oestreicher to do anything but get away from the Third. Can't have any more of this horse-stealing; it's demoralizing," and the regiment plodded along, laughing at old "Soda," who sheepishly brought up the rear, wondering what justice had in store for him.

Nothing happened, however, and presently Oestreicher sought the major, who was cursing his luck for having missed the fight at Las Guasimas. He condoled with the major in a tactful way he had, which business softened things up. While the major was watching him boil the coffee in the tin cups over a little "Indian fire," he put the order in the flames, and it went up in smoke.

"You old rascal!" was all the major said, which meant that the incident was closed.

Right glad was the major to have his orderly during the next week. The years had taught Oestreicher how to stick a dog-tent and make a bed, and how to cook and forage. Oestreicher's military conscience never vibrated over misappropriated things to eat, and Fagin could not have taught him any new arts.

Then came the fateful morning when the Third lay in the long grass under the hail of Mausers and the sickening sun. "Will the major have some water?" said Oestreicher, as he handed over one canteen.

"You go lie down there with the men and don't follow me around—you will get shot," commanded Kessel; but when he looked around again, there was Oestreicher stalking behind. He could fool away no more energy on the man.

Then came the forward movement, the firing and the falling men, and ahead strode the officer, waving his sword and shouting fiercely. Behind followed the jaded old trumpeter, making hard going of it, but determined to keep up. His eye was not on the blazing heights, but on the small of the

"THERE WAS NOTHING TO DO"

major's back, when the officer turned, facing him, and he ran into his arms. Down over his major's face came gushes of blood. He reeled—would have fallen but for the supporting arms of the soldier. The rush of men passed them.

They lay down in the grass. The orderly brushed the blood from the pale face, while he cut up a "first-aid" bandage and bound the wound. Then he gave him water; but the major was far gone, and the orderly trumpeter was very miserable. Oestreicher replaced the major's sword in its scabbard. Men came tottering back, holding on to their wounds.

"Say, Johnson," sung out Oestreicher to a passing soldier, "you ain't hit bad; gimme a lift with the major here." The soldier stopped, while they picked up the unconscious officer and moved heavily off towards the Red Cross flag. Suddenly they lurched badly, and all three figures sank in the pea-green grass. A volley had found them. Johnson rolled slowly from side to side and spat blood. He was dying. Oestreicher hung on to one of his arms, and the bluish-

mauve of the shirt-sleeve grew slowly to a crimson lake. He sat helplessly turning his eyes from the gasping Johnson, the pale major, and the flaming hill-crest. He put his hat over the major's face. He drank from his canteen. There was nothing to do. The tropical July sun beat on them, until his head swam under the ordeal.

Presently a staff-officer came by on a horse.

"Say, captain," yelled the soldier, "come here. Major Kessel is shot in the head. Take him, won't you?"

"Oh, is that you?" said the one addressed as he rode up, for he remembered Kessel's orderly. Dismounting, the two put the limp form on the horse. While Oestreicher led the animal, the captain held the nearly lifeless man in the saddle, bent forward and rolling from side to side. Thus they progressed to the blood-soaked sands beside the river, where the surgeons were working grimly and quickly.

It was a month before the pale old men got off the train at Burton, one an officer and the other a soldier, and many people in the station had a thrill of mingled pity

"'I HOPE THE COLONEL WON'T GET MAD'"

and awe as they looked at them. Two very pretty girls kissed them both, and people wondered the more. But the papers next morning told something about it, and no policeman could be induced to arrest Oestreicher that day when he got drunk in Hogan's saloon, telling how he and the major took San Juan Hill.

Time wore on — wounds healed, and the troops came back from Montauk to the yelling multitudes of Burton, the home station. The winter chilled the fever out of their blood. The recruits came in and were pulled into shape, when the long-expected order for the Philippines came, and the old scenes were re-enacted, just as they had happened in the Kessel household so many times before, only with a great difference: Oestreicher was detached and ordered to stay in the guard of the post. This time the major, who was a colonel now, settled it so it would stay settled. An order is the most terrible and potent thing a soldier knows. Oestreicher shed tears, he pleaded, he got the women to help him, but the major stamped his foot and became ossified about the mouth.

Clearly there was only one thing left for Oestreicher to do in this case, and he did it with soldierly promptness. He got drunk—good and drunk—and the Third Cavalry was on its way to Manila. When the transport was well at sea from Seattle, the colonel was reading a novel on the after-deck. A soldier approached him, saluting, and saying, "I hope the colonel won't get mad—"

The colonel looked up; his eyes opened, he said, slowly, "Well—I—will—be—d——!" and he continued to stare helplessly into the cheerful countenance of Oestreicher, orderly trumpeter, deserter, stowaway, soft food for court-martials. "How did you get here, anyway?"

Then the colonel had a military fit. He cussed Oestreicher long and loud, told him he was a deserter, said his long-service pension was in danger; and true it is that Oestreicher was long past his thirty years in the army, and could retire at any time. But through it all the colonel was so astonished that he could not think—he could only rave at the tangle of his arrangements in the old orderly's interest.

THE DEATH OF OESTREICHER

"How did you get here, anyhow?"

"Came along with the train, sir — same train you were on, sir," vouchsafed the veteran.

"Well—well—well!" soliloquized the colonel, as he sat down and took up his novel. "Get out — I don't want to see you — go away," and Oestreicher turned on his heel.

Other officers gathered around and laughed at the colonel.

"What am I to do with that old man? I can't court-martial him. He would get a million years in Leavenworth if I did. D—— these old soldiers, anyhow—they presume on their service! What can I do?"

"Don't know," said the junior major; "reckon you'll have to stay home yourself if you want to keep Oestreicher there."

It was plain to be seen that public sentiment was with the audacious and partly humorous orderly.

"Well—we—will see—we will see," testily jerked the old man, while the young ones winked at each other — long broad winks, which curled their mouths far up one side.

The colonel has been seeing ever since. I

have only just found out what he "saw," by a letter from an old friend of mine out in the Philippines, which I shall quote.

"You remember Colonel Kessel's old orderly—Oestreicher? Was with us that time we were shooting down in Texas. He was ordered to stay at Jackson Barracks, but he deserted. The men hid him under their bunks on the railroad train, and then let him on the transport at Seattle. Soldiers are like boys—they will help the wicked. One day he presented himself to the old man. Oh, say—you ought to have heard the old Nan-Tan cuss him out—it was the effort of the 'old man's' life! We sat around and enjoyed it, because Oestreicher is a habit with the colonel. We knew he wouldn't do anything about it after he had blown off steam.

"Well, the night after our fight at Cabanatuan it was dark and raining. What do you suppose I saw? Saw the 'old man' in a nipa hut with a doctor, and between them old Oestreicher, shot through the head and dying. There was the colonel sitting around doing what he could for his old dog-soldier. I tell you it was a mighty touching sight.

Make a good story that—worked up with some blue-lights and things. He sat with him until he died. Many officers came in and stood with their hats off, and the colonel actually boo-hooed. As you know, boo-hooing ain't the 'old man's' long suit by a d—— sight!"

THE TROUBLE BROTHERS

BILL AND THE WOLF

THE TROUBLE BROTHERS

BILL AND THE WOLF

SADNESS comes when we think of how long ago things happened. Let us not bother ourselves about time, though we cannot cease to remember that it took youth to sit up all night in the club and ride all next day, or sleep twenty-four hours on a stretch, as the situation demanded. The scene, as I recall it, demanded exactly that. The ambulances of Fort Adobé brought a party of ranking military men, sundry persons of substance, lesser mortals of much enthusiasm, and Colonel William Cody — the Great Unknown — up the long thirty miles of dusty plains from the railroad. The yellow country in the autumn is dry riding and hard work. The officers stationed at the post took a brotherly interest in the new-comers

because they were also sportsmen. You could not drive an iron wedge between the plains type of officer and a sportsman without killing both. There were dinners of custom and such a gathering at the club as was unusual, where the hunting plans were keenly discussed — so keenly, in fact, that it was nearer morning than midnight when it was considered desirable to go to bed.

There were dogs which the sportsmen had brought along—fierce wolf-hounds from Russia—and Buffalo Bill had two malignant pups in which he took a fine interest. The officers at Adobé were possessed of a pack of rough Scotch hounds, besides which, if every individual soldier at the post did not have his individual doggie, I must have made a miscount. It was arranged that we consolidate the collection and run a wolf on the morrow.

When sport was in prospect, *reveille* was the usual hour, regardless of bedtime. Morning found us all mounted, and the throng of horses started up the road. The dogs were kept together ; the morning was of the golden, frosty, Adobé type, and the horses could feel the run which was coming to them.

Everything was ready but the wolf. It was easy to find wolves in that country, however. We had slow dogs to trail them with. But our wolf came to us in the way money comes to a modern politician.

Bill, the chief of sports, as we called him, was riding ahead, when we saw him stop a wagon. It was driven by an old "prairie-dog,"* and on the bed of the wagon was a box made of poles and slats. Inside of this was a big gray wolf, which the man had caught in a trap without injuring it in the least. He hoped to be able to sell it at the post, but he realized his hope and his price right there. "Now, boys, we'll have a wolf-hunt; but let us go back to the post, where the ladies and the men can see it."

We could not agree whether it was the colonel's gallantry or his circus habits which prompted this move, but it was the thing which brought a blighting sorrow to Fort Adobé. We turned back, bundling Mr. Wolf down the road. He sat behind the slats, gazing far away across his native hills, silent

* Nondescript man of the plains.

and dignified as an Indian warrior in captivity.

The ladies were notified, and came out in traps. The soldiers joined us on horseback and on foot, some hundred of them, each with his pet *fice** at his heels.

The domestic servants of the line came down back of the stables. The sentries on post even walked sidewise, that they might miss no details. Adobé was out for a race. I had never supposed there were so many dogs in the world. As pent-up canine animosities displayed themselves, they fell to taking bites at each other in the dense gathering; but their owners policed and soothed them.

Every one lined up. The dogs were arranged as best might. The wagon was driven well out in front, and Colonel William Cody helped the driver to turn the wolf loose, a matter which gave no trouble at all. They removed two slats, and if there had been a charge of melinite behind that wolf he could not have hit that valley any harder.

The old hounds, which had scented and

* Cur-dog.

had seen the wolf, straightway started on his course. With a wild yell the cavalcade sprang forward. Many cur-dogs were ridden screaming under foot. The two bronco ponies of the man who had brought the wolf turned before the rush and were borne along with the charge. Everything was going smoothly.

Of the garrison curs many were left behind. They knew nothing about wolves or field-sports, but, addled by the excitement, fell into the old garrison feuds.

At a ravine we were checked. I looked behind, and the intervening half-mile was dotted here and there with dog-fights of various proportions. Some places there were as high as ten in a bunch, and at others only couples. The infantry soldiers came running out to separate them, and, to my infinite surprise, I saw several of the dough-boys circling each other in the well-known attitudes of the prize-ring. Officers started back to pull them apart. Our dogs were highly excited. Two of them flew at each other; more sprang into the jangle. The men yelled at them and got off their horses. One man kicked another man's dog, whereat the ag-

grieved party promptly swatted him on the eye. This is the way it began. While you read, over a hundred and fifty men were pounding each other with virility, while around and underfoot fought each doggie with all possible vim. Greyhounds cut red slices on quarter-bred bulls; fox-terriers hung on to the hind legs of such big dogs as were fully engaged in front. Fangs glistened; they yelled and bawled and growled, while over them struggled and tripped the men as they swung for the knock-out blow. If a man went down he was covered with biting and tearing dogs. The carnage became awful—a variegated foreground was becoming rapidly red. The officers yelled at the men, trying to assert their authority, but no officer could yell as loud as the acre of dogs. By this time the men were so frenzied that they could not tell a shoulder-strap from a bale of hay. One might as well have attempted to stop the battle of Gettysburg.

Naturally this could not last forever, and gradually the men were torn apart and the dogs unhooked their fangs from their adversaries. During the war I looked towards the

"THIS IS THE WAY IT BEGAN"

fort, hoping for some relief, but the half-mile was dotted here and there with individuals thumping and pounding each other, while their dogs fought at their heels. Where, where had I seen this before, thought came. Yes, yes—in Cæsar's Commentaries. They did things just this way in his time. Bare legs and short swords only were needed here.

Things gradually quieted, and the men started slowly back to the post nursing their wounds. Most of the horses had run away during the engagement. It was clear to be seen that plaster and liniment would run short at Adobé that day.

Colonel Cody sat on his horse, thinking of the destruction he had wrought.

The commanding officer gathered himself and sang out: "Say, Bill, there is your dog-goned old wolf sitting there on the hill looking at you. What do you reckon he thinks?"

"I reckon he thinks we have made trouble enough for to-day. Next time we go hunting, colonel, I think you had better leave your warriors at home," was Bill's last comment as he turned his horse's tail towards the wolf.

WITH THE FIFTH CORPS

WITH THE FIFTH CORPS

I APPROACH this subject of the Santiago campaign with awe, since the ablest correspondents in the country were all there, and they wore out lead-pencils most industriously. I know I cannot add to the facts, but I remember my own emotions, which were numerous, interesting, and, on the whole, not pleasant. I am as yet unable to decide whether sleeping in a mud-puddle, the confinement of a troop-ship, or being shot at is the worst. They are all irritating, and when done on an empty stomach, with the object of improving one's mind, they are extravagantly expensive. However, they satisfied a life of longing to see men do the greatest thing which men are called on to do.

The creation of things by men in time of peace is of every consequence, but it does

not bring forth the tumultuous energy which accompanies the destruction of things by men in war. He who has not seen war only half comprehends the possibilities of his race. Having thought of this thing before, I got a correspondent's pass, and ensconced myself with General Shafter's army at Tampa.

When Hobson put the cork in Cervera's bottle, it became necessary to send the troops at once, and then came the first shock of the war to me. It was in the form of an order to dismount two squadrons of each regiment of cavalry and send them on foot. This misuse of cavalry was compelled by the national necessities, for there was not at that time sufficient volunteer infantry equipped and in readiness for the field. It is without doubt that our ten regiments of cavalry are the most perfect things of all Uncle Sam's public institutions. More good honest work has gone into them, more enthusiasm, more intelligence, and they have shown more results, not excepting the new navy or the postal system.

The fires of hatred burned within me. I was nearly overcome by a desire to "go off

the reservation." I wanted to damn some official, or all officialism, or so much thereof as might be necessary. I knew that the cavalry officers were to a man disgusted, and thought they had been misused and abused. They recognized it as a blow at their arm, a jealous, wicked, and ignorant stab. Besides, the interest of my own art required a cavalry charge.

General Miles appeared at Tampa about that time, and I edged around towards him, and threw out my "point." It is necessary to attack General Miles with great care and understanding, if one expects any success. "General, I wonder who is responsible for this order dismounting the cavalry?" I ventured.

I think the "old man" could almost see me coming, for he looked up from the reading of a note, and in a quiet manner, which is habitual with him, said, "Why, don't they want to go?" and he had me flat on the ground.

"Oh yes, of course! They are crazy to go! They would go if they had to walk on their hands!" I said, and departed. A soldier

who did not want to go to Cuba would be like a fire which would not burn — useless entirely. So no one got cursed for that business; but it is a pity that our nation finds it necessary to send cavalry to war on foot. It would be no worse if some day it should conclude to mount "bluejackets" for cavalry purposes, though doubtless the "bluejackets" would "sit tight." But where is the use of specialization? One might as well ask the nurse-girl to curry the family horse.

So the transports gathered to Port Tampa, and the troops got on board, and the correspondents sallied down to their quarters, and then came a wait. A Spanish warship had loomed across the night of some watch-on-deck down off the Cuban coast. Telegrams flew from Washington to "stop where you are." The mules and the correspondents were unloaded, and the whole enterprise waited.

Here I might mention a series of events which were amusing. The exigencies of the service left many young officers behind, and these all wanted, very naturally, to go to Cuba and get properly shot, as all good

soldiers should. They used their influence with the general officers in command; they begged, they implored, and they explained deviously and ingeniously why the expedition needed their particular services to insure success. The old generals, who appreciated the proper spirit which underlay this enthusiasm, smiled grimly as they turned "the young scamps" down. I used to laugh to myself when I overheard these interviews, for one could think of nothing so much as the school-boy days, when he used to beg off going to school for all sorts of reasons but the real one, which was a ball-game or a little shooting-trip.

Presently the officials got the Spanish war-ship off their nerves, and the transports sailed. Now it is so arranged in the world that I hate a ship in a compound, triple-expansion, forced-draught way. Barring the disgrace, give me "ten days on the island." Do anything to me, but do not have me entered on the list of a ship. It does not matter if I am to be the lordly proprietor of the finest yacht afloat, make me a feather in a sick chicken's tail on

shore, and I will thank you. So it came about that I did an unusual amount of real suffering in consequence of living on the *Segurança* during the long voyage to Cuba. I used to sit out on the after-deck and wonder why, at my time of life, I could not so arrange my affairs that I could keep off ships. I used to consider seriously if it would not be a good thing to jump overboard and let the leopard-sharks eat me, and have done with a miserable existence which I did not seem to be able to control.

When the first landing was made, General Shafter kept all the correspondents and the foreign military attachés in his closed fist, and we all hated him mightily. We shall probably forgive him, but it will take some time. He did allow us to go ashore and see the famous interview which he and Admiral Sampson held with Garcia, and for the first time to behold the long lines of ragged Cuban patriots, and I was convinced that it was no mean or common impulse which kept up the determination of these ragged, hungry souls.

Then on the morning of the landing at

Daiquiri the soldiers put on their blanket rolls, the navy boats and launches lay by the transports, and the light ships of Sampson's fleet ran slowly into the little bay and "turned everything loose" on the quiet, palm-thatched village. A few fires were burning in the town, but otherwise it was quiet. After severely pounding the coast, the launches towed in the long lines of boats deep laden with soldiery, and the correspondents and foreigners saw them go into the overhanging smoke. We held our breath. We expected a most desperate fight for the landing. After a time the smoke rolled away, and our people were on the beach, and not long after some men climbed the steep hill on which stood a block-house, and we saw presently the Stars and Stripes break from the flag-staff. "They are Chinamen!" said a distinguished foreign soldier; and he went to the other side of the boat, and sat heavily down to his reading of our artillery drill regulations.

We watched the horses and mules being thrown overboard, we saw the last soldiers going ashore, and we bothered General

Shafter's aid, the gallant Miley, until he put us all on shore in order to abate the awful nuisance of our presence.

No one had any transportation in the campaign, not even colonels of regiments, except their good strong backs. It was for every man to personally carry all his own hotel accommodations; so we correspondents laid out our possessions on the deck, and for the third time sorted out what little we could take. I weighed a silver pocket-flask for some time, undecided as to the possibility of carriage. It is now in the woods of Cuba, or in the ragged pack of some Cuban soldier. We had finally three days of crackers, coffee, and pork in our haversacks, our canteens, rubber ponchos, cameras, and six-shooter—or practically what a soldier has.

I moved out with the Sixth Cavalry a mile or so, and as it was late afternoon, we were ordered to bivouac. I sat on a hill, and down in the road below saw the long lines of troops pressing up the valley towards Siboney. When our troops got on the sand beach, each old soldier adjusted his

roll, shouldered his rifle, and started for Santiago, apparently by individual intuition.

The troops started, and kept marching just as fast as they could. They ran the Spaniards out of Siboney, and the cavalry brigade regularly marched down their retreating columns at Las Guasimas, fought them up a defile, outflanked, and sent them flying into Santiago. I think our army would never have stopped until it cracked into the doomed city in column formation, if Shafter had not discovered this unlooked-for enterprise, and sent his personal aide on a fast horse with positive orders to halt until the "cracker-line" could be fixed up behind them.

In the morning I sat on the hill, and still along the road swung the hard-marching columns. The scales dropped from my eyes. I could feel the impulse, and still the Sixth was held by orders. I put on my "little hotel equipment," bade my friends good-bye, and "hit the road." The sides of it were blue with cast-off uniforms. Coats and overcoats were strewn about, while the gray blankets lay in the camps just where the soldiers had

gotten up from them after the night's rest. This I knew would happen. Men will not carry what they can get along without unless they are made to; and it is a bad thing to "make" American soldiers, because they know what is good for them better than any one who sits in a roller-chair. In the tropics mid-day marching under heavy kits kills more men than damp sleeping at night. I used to think the biggest thing in Shafter's army was my pack.

It was all so strange, this lonely tropic forest, and so hot. I fell in with a little bunch of headquarters cavalry orderlies, some with headquarters horses, and one with a mule dragging two wheels, which I cannot call a cart, on which General Young's stuff was tied. We met Cubans loitering along, their ponies loaded with abandoned soldier-clothes. Staff-officers on horseback came back and said that there had been a fight on beyond, and that Colonel Wood was killed and young Fish shot dead—that the Rough Riders were all done to pieces. There would be more fighting, and we pushed forward, sweating under the stifling heat of the jungle-choked

road. We stopped and cracked cocoanuts to drink the milk. Once, in a sort of savanna, my companions halted and threw cartridges into their carbines. I saw two or three Spanish soldiers on ahead in some hills and brush. We pressed on; but as the Spanish soldiers did not seem to be concerned as to our presence, I allowed they were probably Cubans who had taken clothes from dead Spanish soldiers, and so it turned out. The Cubans seem to know each other by scent, but it bothered the Northern men to make a distinction between Spanish and Cuban, even when shown Spanish prisoners in order that they might recognize their enemy by sight. If a simple Cuban who stole Spanish soldier clothes could only know how nervous it made the trigger fingers of our regulars, he would have died of fright. He created the same feeling that a bear would, and the impulse to "pull up and let go" was so instinctive and sudden with our men that I marvel more mistakes were not made.

At night I lay up beside the road outside of Siboney, and cooked my supper by a sol-

dier fire, and lay down under a mango-tree on my rubber, with my haversack for a pillow. I could hear the shuffling of the marching troops, and see by the light of the fire near the road the white blanket-rolls glint past its flame—tired, sweaty men, mysterious and silent too but for the clank of tin cups and the monotonous shuffle of feet.

In the early morning the field near me was covered with the cook-fires of infantry, which had come in during the night. Presently a battery came dragging up, and was greeted with wild cheers from the infantry, who crowded up to the road. It was a great tribute to the guns; for here in the face of war the various arms realized their interdependence. It is a solace for cavalry to know that there is some good steady infantry in their rear, and it is a vast comfort for infantry to feel that their front and flanks are covered, and both of them like to have the shrapnel travelling their way when they "go in."

At Siboney I saw the first wounded Rough Riders, and heard how they had behaved.

From this time people began to know who this army doctor was, this Colonel Wood. Soldiers and residents in the Southwest had known him ten years back. They knew Leonard Wood was a soldier, skin, bones, and brain, who travelled under the disguise of a doctor, and now they know more than this.

Then I met a fellow-correspondent, Mr. John Fox, and we communed deeply. We had not seen this fight of the cavalry brigade, and this was because we were not at the front. We would not let it happen again. We slung our packs and most industriously plodded up the Via del Rey until we got to within hailing distance of the picket posts, and he said: "Now, Frederic, we will stay here. They will pull off no more fights of which we are not a party of the first part." And stay we did. If General Lawton moved ahead, we went up and cultivated Lawton; but if General Chaffee got ahead, we were his friends, and gathered at his mess fire. To be popular with us it was necessary for a general to have command of the advance.

But what satisfying soldiers Lawton and Chaffee are! Both seasoned, professional military types. Lawton, big and long, forceful, and with iron determination. Chaffee, who never dismounts but for a little sleep during the darkest hours of the night, and whose head might have been presented to him by one of William's Norman barons. Such a head! We used to sit around and study that head. It does not belong to the period; it is remote, when the race was young and strong; and it has "warrior" sculptured in every line. It may seem trivial to you, but I must have people "look their part." That so many do not in this age is probably because men are so complicated; but "war is a primitive art," and that is the one objection I had to von Moltke, with his simple, student face. He might have been anything. Chaffee is a soldier.

The troops came pouring up the road, reeking under their packs, dusty, and with their eyes on the ground. Their faces were deeply lined, their beards stubby, but their minds were set on "the front"—"on Santiago." There was a suggestion of remorse-

"AT THE BLOODY FORD OF THE SAN JUAN"

less striving in their dogged stepping along, and it came to me that to turn them around would require some enterprise. I thought at the time that the Spanish commander would do well to assume the offensive, and marching down our flank, pierce the centre of the straggling column; but I have since changed my mind, because of the superior fighting ability which our men showed. It must be carefully remembered that, with the exception of three regiments of Shafter's army, and even these were "picked volunteers," the whole command was our regular army —trained men, physically superior to any in the world, as any one will know who understands the requirements of our enlistment as against that of conscript troops; and they were expecting attack, and praying devoutly for it. Besides, at Las Guasimas we got the *moral* on the Spanish.

Then came the "cracker problem." The gallant Cabanais pushed his mules day and night. I thought they would go to pieces under the strain, and I think every "packer" who worked on the Santiago line will never forget it. Too much credit cannot be given

them. The command was sent into the field without its proper ratio of pack-mules, and I hope the blame of that will come home to some one some day. That was the *direct* and *only* cause of all the privation and delay which became so notable in Shafter's operations. I cannot imagine a man who would recommend wagons for a tropical country during the rainy season. Such a one should not be censured or reprimanded; he should be spanked with a slipper.

So while the engineers built bridges, and the troops made roads behind them, and until we got "*three days' crackers ahead*" for the whole command, things stopped. The men were on half-rations, were out of tobacco, and it rained, rained, rained. We were very miserable.

Mr. John Fox and I had no cover to keep the rain out, and our determination to stay up in front hindered us from making friends with any one who had. Even the private soldiers had their dog-tents, but we had nothing except our two rubber ponchos. At evening, after we had "bummed" some crackers and coffee from some good-natured

officer, we repaired to our neck of woods, and stood gazing at our mushy beds. It was good, soft, soggy mud, and on it, or rather in it, we laid one poncho, and over that we spread the other.

"Say, Frederic, that means my death; I am subject to malaria."

"Exactly so, John. This cold of mine will end in congestion of the lungs, or possibly bronchial consumption. Can you suggest any remedy?"

"The fare to New York," said John, as we turned into our wallow.

At last I had the good fortune to buy a horse from an invalided officer. It seemed great fortune, but it had its drawback. I was ostracized by my fellow-correspondents.

All this time the reconnoissance of the works of Santiago and the outlying post of Caney was in progress. It was rumored that the forward movement would come, and being awakened by the bustle, I got up in the dark, and went gliding around until I managed to steal a good feed of oats for my horse. This is an important truth as showing the demoralization of war.

In the pale light I saw a staff-officer who was going to Caney, and I followed him. We overtook others, and finally came to a hill overlooking the ground which had been fought over so hard during the day. Capron's battery was laying its guns, and back of the battery were staff-officers and correspondents eagerly scanning the country with field-glasses. In the rear of these stood the hardy First Infantry, picturesquely eager and dirty, while behind the hill were the battery horses, out of harm's way.

The battery opened and knocked holes in the stone fort, but the fire did not appear to depress the rifle-pits. Infantry in the jungle below us fired, and were briskly answered from the trenches.

I had lost my canteen and wanted a drink of water, so I slowly rode back to a creek. I was thinking, when along came another correspondent. We discussed things, and thought Caney would easily fall before Lawton's advance, but we had noticed a big movement of our troops towards Santiago, and we decided that we would return to the main road and see which promised

"BEFORE THE WARNING SCREAM OF THE SHRAPNEL"

best. Sure enough, the road was jammed with troops, and up the hill of El Poso went the horses of Grimes's battery under whip and spur. Around El Poso ranch stood Cubans, and along the road the Rough Riders—Roosevelt's now, for Wood was a brigadier.

The battery took position, and behind it gathered the foreigners, naval and military, with staff-officers and correspondents. It was a picture such as may be seen at a manœuvre. Grimes fired a few shells towards Santiago, and directly came a shrill screaming shrapnel from the Spanish lines. It burst over the Rough Riders, and the manœuvre picture on the hill underwent a lively change. It was thoroughly evident that the Spaniards had the range of everything in the country. They had studied it out. For myself, I fled, dragging my horse up the hill, out of range of Grimes's inviting guns. Some as gallant soldiers and some as daring correspondents as it is my pleasure to know did their legs proud there. The tall form of a staff-major moved in my front in jack-rabbit bounds. Prussian, English, and Japanese, correspondents, ar-

tists, all the news, and much high-class art and literature, were flushed, and went straddling up the hill before the first barrel of the Dons. Directly came the warning scream of No. 2, and we dropped and hugged the ground like star-fish. Bang! right over us it exploded. I was dividing a small hollow with a distinguished colonel of the staff.

"Is this thing allowed, colonel?"

"Oh yes, indeed!" he said. "I don't think we could stop those shrapnel."

And the next shell went into the battery, killing and doing damage. Following shell were going into the helpless troops down in the road, and Grimes withdrew his battery for this cause. He had been premature. All this time no one's glass could locate the fire of the Spanish guns, and we could see Capron's smoke miles away on our right. Smoky powder belongs with arbalists and stone axes and United States ordnance officers, which things all belong in museums, with other dusty rust.

Then I got far up on the hill, walking over the prostrate bodies of my old friends the

Tenth Cavalry, who were hugging the hot ground to get away from the hotter shrapnel. There I met a clubmate from New York, and sundry good foreigners, notably the Prussian (von Goetzen), and that lovely "old British salt" Paget, and the Japanese major, whose name I could never remember. We sat there. I listened to much expert artillery talk, though the talk was not quite so impressive as the practice of that art.

But the heat — let no man ever attempt that after Kipling's "and the heat would make your blooming eyebrows crawl."

This hill was the point of vantage; it overlooked the flat jungle, San Juan hills, Santiago, and Caney, the whole vast country to the mountains which walled in the whole scene. I heard the experts talk, and I love military science, but I slowly thought to myself this is not my art—neither the science of troop movement nor the whole landscape. My art requires me to go down in the road where the human beings are who do these things which science dictates, in the landscape which to me is overshadowed by their presence. I rode slowly, on account

of the awful sun. Troops were standing everywhere, lying all about, moving regularly up the jungle road towards Santiago, and I wound my way along with them, saying, "Gangway, please."

War is productive of so many results, things happen so awfully fast, men do such strange things, pictures make themselves at every turn, the emotions are so tremendously strained, that what knowledge I had fled away from my brain, and I was in a trance; and do you know, cheerful reader, I am not going to describe a battle to you.

War, storms at sea, mountains, deserts, pests, and public calamities leave me without words. I simply said, "Gangway" as I wormed my way up the fateful road to Santiago. Fellows I knew out West and up North and down South passed their word to me, and I felt that I was not alone. A shrapnel came shrieking down the road, and I got a drink of water and a cracker from Colonel Garlington. The soldiers were lying alongside and the staff-officers were dismounted, also stopping quietly in the shade of the nearest bush. The column of

troops was working its way into the battle-line.

"I must be going," I said, and I mounted my good old mare—the colonel's horse. It was a tender, hand-raised trotting-horse, which came from Colorado, and was perfectly mannered. We were in love.

The long columns of men on the road had never seen this condition before. It was their first baby. Oh, a few of the old soldiers had, but it was so long ago that this must have come to them almost as a new sensation. Battles are like other things in nature—no two the same.

I could hear noises such as you can make if you strike quickly with a small walking-stick at a very few green leaves. Some of them were very near and others more faint. They were the Mausers, and out in front through the jungle I could hear what sounded like a Fourth of July morning, when the boys are setting off their crackers. It struck me as new, strange, almost uncanny, because I wanted the roar of battle, which same I never did find. These long-range, smokeless bolts are so far-reaching, and there is so

little fuss, that a soldier is for hours under fire getting into the battle proper, and he has time to think. That is hard when you consider the seriousness of what he is thinking about. The modern soldier must have moral quality; the gorrilla is out of date. This new man may go through a war, be in a dozen battles, and survive a dozen wounds without seeing an enemy. This would be unusual, but easily might happen. All our soldiers of San Juan were for the most part of a day under fire, subject to wounds and death, before they had even a chance to know where the enemy was whom they were opposing. To all appearance they were apathetic, standing or marching through the heat of the jungle. They flattened themselves before the warning scream of the shrapnel, but that is the proper thing to do. Some good-natured fellow led the regimental mascot, which was a fice, or a fox-terrier. Really, the dog of war is a fox-terrier. Stanley took one through Africa. He is in all English regiments, and he is gradually getting into ours. His flag is short, but it sticks up straight on all occasions, and he is a vaga-

bond. Local ties must set lightly on soldiers and fox-terriers.

Then came the light as I passed out of the jungle and forded San Juan River. The clicking in the leaves continued, and the fire-crackers rattled out in front. "Get down, old man; you'll catch one!" said an old alkali friend, and I got down, sitting there with the officers of the cavalry brigade. But promptly some surgeons came along, saying that it was the only safe place, and they began to dig the sand to level it. We, in consequence, moved out into the crackle, and I tied my horse with some others.

"Too bad, old fellow," I thought; "I should have left you behind. Modern rifle fire is rough on horses. They can't lie down. But, you dear thing, you will have to take your chances." And then I looked at the preparation for the field hospital. It was altogether too suggestive. A man came, stooping over, with his arms drawn up, and hands flapping downward at the wrists. That is the way with all people when they are shot through the body, because they want

to hold the torso steady, because if they don't it hurts. Then the oncoming troops poured through the hole in the jungle which led to the San Juan River, which was our line of battle, as I supposed. I knew nothing of the plan of battle, and I have an odd conceit that no one else did, but most all the line-officers were schooled men, and they were able to put two and two together mighty fast, and in most instances faster than headquarters. When educated soldiers are thrown into a battle without understanding, they understand themselves.

As the troops came pouring across the ford they stooped as low as they anatomically could, and their faces were wild with excitement. The older officers stood up as straight as if on parade. They may have done it through pride, or they may have known that it is better to be "drilled clean" than to have a long, ranging wound. It was probably both ideas which stiffened them up so.

Then came the curious old tube drawn by a big mule, and Borrowe with his squad of the Rough Riders. It was the dynamite-gun. The mule was unhooked and turned

loose. The gun was trundled up the road and laid for a shot, but the cartridge stuck, and for a moment the cheerful grin left the red face of Borrowe. Only for a moment; for back he came, and he and his men scraped and whittled away at the thing until they got it fixed. The poor old mule lay down with a grunt and slowly died. The fire was now incessant. The bullets came like the rain. The horses lay down one after another as the Mausers found their billets. I tried to take mine to a place of safety, but a sharp-shooter potted at me, and I gave it up. There was no place of safety. For a long time our people did not understand these sharp-shooters in their rear, and I heard many men murmur that their own comrades were shooting from behind. It was very demoralizing to us, and on the Spaniards' part a very desperate enterprise to lie deliberately back of our line; but of course, with bullets coming in to the front by the bucketful, no one could stop for the few tailing shots. The Spaniards were hidden in the mango-trees, and had smokeless powder.

Now men came walking or were carried into the temporary hospital in a string. One beautiful boy was brought in by two tough, stringy, hairy old soldiers, his head hanging down behind. His shirt was off, and a big red spot shone brilliantly against his marble-like skin. They laid him tenderly down, and the surgeon stooped over him. His breath came in gasps. The doctor laid his arms across his breast, and shaking his head, turned to a man who held a wounded foot up to him, dumbly imploring aid, as a dog might. It made my nerves jump, looking at that grewsome hospital, sand-covered, with bleeding men, and yet it seemed to have fascinated me; but I gathered myself and stole away. I went down the creek, keeping under the bank, and then out into the "scrub," hunting for our line; but I could not find our line. The bullets cut and clicked around, and a sharp-shooter nearly did for me. The thought came to me, what if I am hit out here in the bush while all alone? I shall never be found. I would go back to the road, where I should be discovered in such case; and I ran so quick-

THE TEMPORARY HOSPITAL

ly across a space that my sharp-shooting Spanish friend did not see me. After that I stuck to the road. As I passed along it through an open space I saw a half-dozen soldiers sitting under a tree. "Look out—sharp-shooters!" they sang out. "Wheet!" came a Mauser, and it was right next to my ear, and two more. I dropped in the tall guinea-grass, and crawled to the soldiers, and they studied the mango-trees; but we could see nothing. I think that episode cost me my sketch-book. I believe I lost it during the crawl, and our friend the Spaniard shot so well I wouldn't trust him again.

From the vantage of a little bank under a big tree I had my first glimpse of San Juan Hill, and the bullets whistled about. One would "tumble" on a tree or ricochet from the earth, and then they shrieked. Our men out in front were firing, but I could not see them. I had no idea that our people were to assault that hill—I thought at the time such an attempt would be unsuccessful. I could see with my powerful glass the white lines of the Spanish intrenchments. I did not understand how our men could stay out

there under that gruelling, and got back into the safety of a low bank.

A soldier said, while his stricken companions were grunting around him, "Boys, I have got to go one way or the other, pretty damn quick." Directly I heard our line yelling, and even then did not suppose it was an assault.

Then the Mausers came in a continuous whistle. I crawled along to a new place, and finally got sight of the fort, and just then I could distinguish our blue soldiers on the hill-top, and I also noticed that the Mauser bullets rained no more. Then I started after. The country was alive with wounded men—some to die in the dreary jungle, some to get their happy-home draft, but all to be miserable. Only a handful of men got to the top, where they broke out a flag and cheered. "Cheer" is the word for that sound. You have got to hear it once where it means so much, and ever after you will grin when Americans make that noise.

San Juan was taken by infantry and dismounted cavalry of the United States regular army without the aid of artillery. It was

the most glorious feat of arms I ever heard of, considering every condition. It was done without grub, without reserves of either ammunition or men, under tropical conditions. It was a storm of intrenched heights, held by veteran troops armed with modern guns, supported by artillery, and no other troops on the earth would have even thought they could take San Juan heights, let alone doing it.

I followed on and up the hill. Our men sat about in little bunches in the pea-green guinea-grass, exhausted. A young officer of the Twenty-fourth, who was very much excited, threw his arms about me, and pointing to twenty-five big negro infantrymen sitting near, said, "That's all—that is all that is left of the Twenty-fourth Infantry," and the tears ran off his mustache.

Farther on another officer sat with his arms around his knees. I knew him for one of these analytical chaps—a bit of a philosopher—too highly organized—so as to be morose. "I don't know whether I am brave or not. Now there is S——; he don't mind this sort of thing. I think—"

"Oh, blow your philosophy!" I interrupted. "If you were not brave, you would not be here."

The Spanish trenches were full of dead men in the most curious attitudes, while about on the ground lay others, mostly on their backs, and nearly all shot in the head. Their set teeth shone through their parted lips, and they were horrible. The life never runs so high in a man as it does when he is charging on the field of battle; death never seems so still and positive.

Troops were moving over to the right, where there was firing. A battery came up and went into position, but was driven back by rifle fire. Our batteries with their smoky powder could not keep guns manned in the face of the Mausers. Then, with gestures much the same as a woman makes when she is herding chickens, the officers pushed the men over the hill. They went crawling. The Spanish were trying to retake the hill. We were short of ammunition. I threw off my hat and crawled forward to have a look through my glass at the beyond. I could hardly see our troops crouching in the grass

beside me, though many officers stood up. The air was absolutely crowded with Spanish bullets. There was a continuous whistle. The shrapnel came screaming over. A ball struck in front of me, and filled my hair and face with sand, some of which I did not get out for days. It jolted my glass and my nerves, and I beat a masterly retreat, crawling rapidly backwards, for a reason which I will let you guess. The small-arms rattled; now and then a wounded man came back and started for the rear, some of them shot in the face, bleeding hideously.

"How goes it?" I asked one.

"Ammunition! ammunition!" said the man, forgetful of his wound.

I helped a man to the field hospital, and got my horse. The lucky mare was untouched. She was one of three animals not hit out of a dozen tied or left at the hospital. One of these was an enormous mule, loaded down with what was probably officers' blanket rolls, which stood sidewise quietly as only a mule can all day, and the last I saw of him he was alive. Two fine officers' chargers lay at his feet, one dead and the

other unable to rise, and suffering pathetically. The mule was in such an exposed position that I did not care to unpack him, and Captain Miley would not let any one shoot a horse, for fear of the demoralizing effect of fire in the rear.

A trumpeter brought in a fine officer's horse, which staggered around in a circle. I saw an English sabre on the saddle, and recognized it as Lieutenant Short's, and indeed I knew the horse too. He was the fine thoroughbred which that officer rode in Madison Square military tournament last winter, when drilling the Sixth Cavalry. The trumpeter got the saddle off, and the poor brute staggered around with a bewildered look in his eager eyes, shot in the stifle-joint, I thought; and then he sat down in the creek as a dog would on a hot day. The suffering of animals on a battle-field is most impressive to one who cares for them.

I again started out to the hill, along with a pack-train loaded with ammunition. A mule went down, and bullets and shell were coming over the hill aplenty. The wounded going to the rear cheered the ammunition,

"THE WOUNDED, GOING TO THE REAR, CHEERED THE AMMUNITION"

and when it was unpacked at the front, the soldiers seized it like gold. They lifted a box in the air and dropped it on one corner, which smashed it open.

"Now we can hold San Juan Hill against them garlics — hey, son!" yelled a happy cavalryman to a doughboy.

"You bet—until we starve to death."

"Starve nothin' — we'll eat them gun-teams."

Well, well, I said, I have no receipt for licking the kind of troops these boys represent. And yet some of the generals wanted to retreat.

Having had nothing to eat this day, I thought to go back to headquarters camp and rustle something. Besides, I was sick. But beyond the hill, down the road, it was very dangerous, while on the hill we were safe. "Wait for a lull; one will come soon," advised an old soldier. It is a curious thing that battle firing comes like a big wind, and has its lulls. Now it was getting dark, and during a lull I went back. I gave a wounded man a ride to the field hospital, but I found I was too weak myself to walk

far. I had been ill during the whole campaign, and latterly had fever, which, taken together with the heat, sleeping in the mud, marching, and insufficient food, had done for me.

The sight of that road as I wound my way down it was something I cannot describe. The rear of a battle. All the broken spirits, bloody bodies, hopeless, helpless suffering which drags its weary length to the rear, are so much more appalling than anything else in the world that words won't mean anything to one who has not seen it. Men half naked, men sitting down on the road-side utterly spent, men hopping on one foot with a rifle for a crutch, men out of their minds from sunstroke, men dead, and men dying. Officers came by white as this paper, carried on rude litters made by their devoted soldiers, or borne on their backs. I got some food about ten o'clock and lay down. I was in the rear at headquarters, and there were no bullets and shells cracking about my ears, but I found my nerves very unsettled. During the day I had discovered no particular nervousness

"IN THE REAR OF THE BATTLE—WOUNDED ON THE SAN JUAN ROAD"

in myself, quite contrary to my expectations, since I am a nervous man, but there in the comparative quiet of the woods the reaction came. Other fellows felt the same, and we compared notes. Art and literature under Mauser fire is a jerky business; it cannot be properly systematized. I declared that I would in the future paint "set pieces for dining-rooms." Dining-rooms are so much more amusing than camps. The novelist allowed that he would be forced to go home and complete "The Romance of a Quart Bottle." The explorer declared that his treatise on the "Flora of Bar Harbor" was promised to his publishers.

Soldiers always joke after a battle. They have to loosen the strings, or they will snap. There was a dropping fire in the front, and we understood our fellows were intrenching. Though I had gotten up that morning at half past three, it was nearly that time again before I went to sleep. The fever and the strong soldier-coffee banished sleep; then, again, I could not get the white bodies which lay in the moonlight, with the dark spots on them, out of my mind. Most of

the dead on modern battle-fields are half naked, because of the "first-aid bandage." They take their shirts off, or their pantaloons, put on the dressing, and die that way.

It is well to bear in mind the difference in the point of view of an artist or a correspondent, and a soldier. One has his duties, his responsibilities, or his gun, and he is on the firing-line under great excitement, with his reputation at stake. The other stalks through the middle distance, seeing the fight and its immediate results, the wounded; lying down by a dead body, mayhap, when the bullets come quickly; he will share no glory; he has only the responsibility of seeing clearly what he must tell; and he must keep his nerve. I think the soldier sleeps better nights.

The next day I started again for the front, dismounted, but I only got to El Poso Hill. I lay down under a bank by the creek. I had the fever. I only got up to drink deeply of the dirty water. The heat was intense. The re-enforcing troops marched slowly up the road. The shells came railroading down through the jungle, but these troops went

on, calm, steady, like true Americans. I made my way back to our camp, and lay there until nightfall, making up my mind and unmaking it as to my physical condition, until I concluded that I had "finished."

THE END

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